

# RELIGION IN LIFE

A CHRISTIAN QUARTERLY

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Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Arthur F. Stevens, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the business manager of the quarterly, *RELIGION IN LIFE*, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, to wit:

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## Evangelism and Christian Fellowship

DOUGLAS V. STEERE

ONE of the little-mentioned gains of the current preaching missions that are moving about this country is what they often accomplish for the men and women who do the preaching. For I know of no more fascinating occasions than the morning after-breakfast conference hour, where the group of leaders of the mission discuss informally what they are about. The local group might have ground for some alarm if it knew the confessions of confusion and failure that take place there. At no point is this confusion more often evidenced than in what the mission is supposed to accomplish.

If there is one of the areas where modern religious leaders feel less secure than at almost any period in the past two centuries it is on this matter of evangelism. It is not unknown for some of those who express themselves most forcefully in the pulpit to admit that in their evangelical message they feel themselves "between two worlds"—an old world where one seeks to produce a sharp conviction of sin and the entry into a personal commitment to the Comforter of the weary and heavy-laden, and a new world where the study of psychology, the too often repeated experience of a forced emotional conversion, or of the smug, contented individualistic Pharisees who had entered the religious life through that gate, reaches out at him as he speaks and lays its restraining hand on his shoulder as he gives a modernized version of the old-world evangelization message. This state of inward division is too common a phenomenon to be overlooked, and more frank and open discussions of this issue are imperative at this time.

A rough outline of such a discussion might naturally mark out four divisions. What is the content of the Christian evangel, of the good news that can be preached by the preacher and accepted or rejected by the critical listener with a full and genuine consciousness in both of their minds that they are on solid ground. Not obsolete, disproven, mythical, irrelevant issues, but true and living options are being squarely put here, and the decision assumes a sober urgency. The second is an inquiry, in the light of the content of the "good news," into the elements in the old evangelism that have been found wanting. The third is the survey of the means of producing commitment to

this *good news* in the modern mind. The fourth is the nurturing of this initial commitment into an enduring rootage in the Christian life—it is the question of Christian fellowship and if it were present and could be relied upon it would profoundly affect the answer one might give to the third question.

Because it is believed that no adequate contemporary discussion of the third issue of producing commitment can possibly be offered until it is placed in the setting of the other three questions, and especially in the light of Christian fellowship, it is proposed here to postpone any comment on producing commitment to a future discussion, and to lay the emphasis primarily upon the relationship of evangelism and Christian fellowship.

#### THE CONTENT OF THE EVANGEL

What, then, is the *good news*? There are five aspects of the evangel which stand out with clarity in my mind:

1. God's love and concern for the salvation of each man that was ever born, as manifested and confirmed in the life and death on the Cross and continued inward working of Jesus through His Holy Spirit. Jesus' words about the "hairs of your head are numbered" and "not a sparrow shall fall," His own concern for the neglected, ostracized persons and groups, His emphasis upon continued forgiveness that evidenced responsibility even for enemies, cannot be set aside. These all speak of a God who cares, who will not be wearied out by resistance, who lays siege to souls, taking the initiative without regard for merit or desert, for age, race, nationality, intelligence, or class. In the eyes of God's loving regard no man is wanting in worth, and no man is beyond the reach of His love. "We trust in the living God who is the Saviour of all men." 1 Timothy 4. 10.

2. The loving God whom Christ revealed and confirmed is a living God. He is operative in the world today, active in all men, in all nature, in all forms of organization, in all processes of history. For His redeeming love, nothing is impossible. Scientific law and the observed facts about the universe in no way outlaw or drive Him into the unexplored corners and the diminishing residuum. No matter what the barriers of outer chaos or inward rebellion, of insensibility or of the deepest suffering, He is at work, He is accessible, and He bears triumph within Himself. He is the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ—not the God of the philosophers.

3. The *good news* of God's love and concern *judges down* that which fails willingly to respond to it. "Behold, I set before you a way of life and a way of death." Unless he is to take the way of death, man's absorption in the instability and ultimate frustrations of either self-centered or community-centered salvation and security calls for repentance and a response to this redeeming love.

4. The *goods news* of God's love is already at work in a man long before any preacher confronts him with it. Hence no preacher works alone, and he should freely acknowledge the operativeness of God upon the souls of men prior to his arrival. His announcement of the good news meets within the soul of man a yearning of the *hidden Seed*, or *Ground*, or *Principle* that alone is able to recognize this good news of the loving God as its true fulfillment, as its source, as its goal, as its redeemer. The egocentric bent of the mind and the will and the emotions to be self-complete may have trampled under this seat within the soul. But as it responds to God's gaze it makes them restless, it frustrates their proud effort at self-sufficiency and ever seeks to bring them under its dominion. Any evangelism that ignores this element will not be likely to survive.

5. The *good news* of God's love will invite men to enter into a divine fellowship, a divine society. Individualistic evangelism has too often neglected this aspect of the *good news*. But the consciousness of it was most vivid in the early Christian community which knew what it was "to be all with one accord in one place," to experience the visitation of the Spirit together, to be branches of a common vine, to be members of a common body, to look forward to dwelling together in a Father's house of many mansions. To respond to the good news meant for them to join God's family, meant entering a divine fellowship of which the earthly fellowship about this center was a precious foretaste.

#### THE FALSE ELEMENTS IN THE OLD EVANGELISM

There is no mistaking the basic criticisms which have made thoughtful Christians in this generation shy away altogether from the old form of evangelism or practice it only with a divided mind.

1. It used violent psychological means that ignored the fourth aspect of the evangel and that were more concerned with immediate results than with the ultimate release and emancipation of the convert as a free member of God's family.

2. It was too naïve about what constituted conversion, or, to put it in another way, it was too naïve in assuming that its work largely ended with conventional conversion and baptism.

3. It was too individualistic in its emphasis, and it failed to bring the convert into the corporate stream of the responsibilities and privileges of Christian fellowship. Where it did emphasize some corporate responsibility, as in certain well-known contemporary movements, it kept it directed into a rigidly stereotyped form of personal piety and into a responsibility for awakening others to a consciousness of their most obvious sins. Further, its fellowship, like that of the Masonic lodge, has been almost exclusively devoted to the initiation of new members according to a stereotyped ritual. Its fellowship, therefore, can only minister to the life of its members in so far as that ministering would have a more or less direct bearing upon their efficiency as agents in this initiation process.

The germ of each of these criticisms is not negative but positive, and each has a bearing upon the evangel and the fellowship of the Church. In the first place, no evangelism that sets forth the love and individual concern of the God revealed in Jesus Christ can any longer ignore the prior action of God upon the soul in the living Seed, or Ground, or Principle of God already present within men. For it is not only as this is raised up and the egocentric powers of a man's nature are judged down by the action of the divine Love upon Him—that he is first made capable of real Christian fellowship. But it is from this same Seed in him, and from its coming into dominion over the other forces in his life, that he is made able to persevere and to grow in this fellowship. This means that again, as he has fallen from Christian fellowship, it is to this center in him that he must turn for God's renewal. If by violent psychological means and in order to induce a quick conversion either in a so-called Christian or a non-Christian land, the evangelist debases a man into nothing but the powers of darkness in him and ignores God's operative presence within the Ground of his being, he may produce the desired result, a collapse of the personality upon his, the evangelist's, interpretation of God. He may even produce a complete revulsion against his whole former background. But he may leave this man, when the wounds heal, stiff, deformed, and incapable either of growth in the religious life or of free membership in a fellowship of those redeemed and renewed by the God of love revealed to them by Christ. He may also leave him intolerant, because he is fixated upon this exclusive form of Caesarian birth that he has experienced, and incapable

of acknowledging Christian fellowship with those who have been spiritually born by the more common method.

The new evangelism will not overlook the necessity for commitment. But the object of that commitment, Christ and the God He revealed, will be presented as the answer to that restlessness, the fulfillment of that search, the entry upon the narrow way, the forgiveness and renewal for which the soul had been already yearning. This sensitiveness that God is already at work on a man or upon a non-Christian people long before the evangelist arrives, and that the souls of all men have a Ground within them that keeps them in travail and keeps them dimly searching for the supreme revelation that will speak to their common condition, will mark the new evangelism. And it will go far in shaping a type of evangelism that will bring its converts into the fellowship of the Church, conscious that they have even now only begun to yield to God's love and that in this fellowship of the thankful-hearted they can minister and be ministered to in every phase of their life. Here the converts have entered a fellowship prepared and eager for growth in the religious life. Here, in this fellowship, they can sense something of what Francis of Assisi meant when, in the last months of his life, he used to say gaily to his brothers: "Now let us begin to be Christians."

The second criticism of evangelism; that it was naïve in its notion of what constituted conversion and that it stopped too soon, goes straight to the heart of the relation of the evangel and the fellowship of the Church. For the old evangelism took the first violent symptoms of a sudden "changed" life as the point of focus in conversion. Baptism and entry into the Church often accompanied this, but they were only formal acknowledgments of the great event. The symptom of celebrating the anniversary of this moment, and the leading question, "When were you saved, brother?" is typical. Such decisive moments in life are of prime importance. But few thoughtful Christians today who have known the religious life from within would assess that moment of change, if it can be dated, as their conversion. That was only the barest beginning. They would be more likely to testify that God has gone on converting them as long as they lived, and that area after area of their own lives and of their relationships with others had been opened up to the new way. What they had thought at the outset was conversion, looked at in perspective, seems the merest fraction of a ninety-degree wheel into the new life.

In one of Paul Claudel's letters he wrote to an inquirer after religion: "One sentence in your letter made me laugh. It was when you told me you

feared that in religion you might find the end to your quest—an end to strife. Dear friend, the day you receive God, you will have a guest within you who will never leave you repose." (*Letters to a Doubter*, p. 24.) It is the *long pull* that matters, and to the thoughtful Christian today what is central is how this primary turning may be linked to the process of growth in response to God. This means that the "experience," the "feeling," the "initial commitment" must find a body. We have here the curious phenomenon, not of the headless horsemen, but of the bodyless and horseless head. Who will give the Lord a body?

To the needs of this curious "mentalism," this disembodied, unincarnated spirit, the fellowship of the churches is the answer. Here, when it is real, is a close and intimate fellowship, which is itself not an accident but a very aspect of the evangel itself. This fellowship is of a piece with the evangel. Here is a sympathetic, understanding house in which to live after the demolition of the old domicile, while the new life is being slowly rewoven. Here is nurture, and discipline, and confession and a regular witness to the new life. Here is hospitality and the suggestion of next steps. Here are more mature members on this journey and yet they, too, come in their needs and in their strength to this fellowship. In a non-Christian country, there must be a community into which the convert may come who has been disowned from his own community by his Christian decision. Gerald Heard's words written for pacifists hold for the subjective need of the Christian convert: "It is clear no individual can stand by himself against the invincible ignorance and blind belief in greed and fear as the only social forces which still dominate our society today. He must gain practical, actual assurance that this belief is only a deadly half-truth which vanishes when the light of actual devotion is kindled against it. He can, however, no more do this by himself than a traveler who has tumbled into a bog in the dark can strike a light to see his way out. His matches are damp. Only in the group-field of fellow believers can he rekindle his light." (*The New Pacifism*, p. 19.)

The fellowship described here is, ideally, present in the churches. As A. E. Taylor rightly says, "The prime business of the Church is to be a fellowship of those who have received the message and are striving to conform their lives to it by making the knowledge and worship of God their central interest, and to receive into that fellowship of adoration all who will enter it in simplicity and truth." (*The Constant Element in Evangelism*, Manuscript, p. 15.)



The corporate worship within the Church, the common adoration, the common confession, the common sacraments of bread and of wine or of silence, the common prayers, the common hymns, the common rededication as sons of God and partakers in the divine nature, the common renewal in responsibility to God and to each other: these mark out the fellowship of the true Church. Yet if the Church is alive, the intimacy of its fellowship will not stop with the provision of this single form of expression. There must also be close fellowships within the Church and among its members that will encourage growth in the religious life. The almost forgotten grace of hospitality will appear again. Common projects will emerge. Larger surfaces of their lives will be opened to each other under God. Without these more intimate fellowships the one in the early stages of conversion—if he begin at all—readily fixates on an early plateau of spiritual growth. The appearance of these lay fellowship groups within the Church in so many different centuries speaks for their essential function. The Third Order of Franciscans, the Beguines, the Friends of God, the Brethren of the Common Life, the Valiant Sixty within the early Society of Friends, the Wesleyan Class Meetings, the conventicle groups within the German Pietist churches, the nineteenth-century missionary fellowship groups within the churches, the Bibel-Stunde groups in Germany and their native counterparts in Norway and Finland, all reveal the capacity for this intimate and more intense side of Christian fellowship appearing within the churches as cells that nourish the Christian body and call forward the wider fellowship of the Church to rise to its true stature.

Again and again a minister longs for the existence of such renewing fellowship groups within his church. He has heard a confession and a commitment to a new life, or he has brought some person through a great sorrow, or he sees that a couple who once were quick with life in the faith are withering away for want of intimate and regular touch with some who now believe as deeply as they once did. If there were only some intimate and congenial fellowship cells into which he could send these people! Just as the wise psychotherapist today is recognizing that there must be a fellowship, a therapeutic group, which his patients may join if the healing is to go on most helpfully, so the Church is again on the verge of discovering the absolute necessity of the presence of these small inward fellowships in its midst.

In times of persecution, as in Germany at present, the very Church itself may draw into this kind of an intimate fellowship. This may be seen, for

example, in the recent practice in a number of rural Rhineland Catholic churches of having the mass said at an altar placed in the center of the church in order to gather the people around it; of the revival of ancient congregational responses that give the people a large share in the service; and of the reappearance of the very early Christian practice of bringing bread and vegetables and laying them on the altar rail as a gift to Christ in response to His gift of the sacrament. These are then distributed to the most needy members of the congregation. Here is the Christian family, the real Christian fellowship emerging again.

The third criticism of the old evangelism was upon its individualistic character. In the new evangelism, the full measure of good news must be given and this means that the call into a divine fellowship of those who know and love and acknowledge their connection with the God revealed in Christ must be issued. Entry into this fellowship will not be incidental, but integral in the good news. It seems to have been no accident that Jesus gathered His little band of disciples who shared life with Him, and wherever Christian fellowships have sprung up since His day they have during their vital life been indwelt by this divine fellowship.

#### THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

This Christian fellowship is unique. It is no ordinary friendship between two or more men who make it up, no matter how exalted John Macmurray has taught us that this may be. Nor is it any many-sided and fearless interaction of two persons that Gregory Vlastos has designated as the essence of love. Theoretically, at least, neither of these relations are impossible to achieve at the higher end of the scale of that morality which Bergson has classed as *organic associations*, and that we experience in the family, the city, the trade, the national and the racial associations. These organic associations are instinctively motivated to promote the outward advantage of the individual and the limited groups concerned. And deep as is their hold upon the individual, this bond is subject to termination when that personal or limited group advantage is not evident. Divorce, war, persecution; and reunion under fear, exhaustion, or the reappearance of outward advantage are all a part of these relations.

The Christian fellowship is never reducible to this. In it the horizontal relationship is always gripped and transcended by the mutual recognition and acknowledgment of a redeeming presence in the midst whose living, loving

power raises and draws these brittle bonds of organic association up to another plane. It is the operative presence of this power that was and is felt in the feet-washing scene at the Last Supper, where even the feet of Judas were washed by Jesus. It is felt at Pentecost and in the chain of little cells of Christian fellowship that burst their national and racial shells and spread throughout the Greco-Roman world. Here the indwelling, risen Christ was felt to be among them, to transform their relationships toward each other, to draw them into an unlimited liability toward each other, to tender their hardness of heart into a willingness to forgive, even to take the initiative in forgiving, and to act against outward advantage and instinctive inclination. This experience was so apparent as to provoke in the outer world a kind of astonished anger in the joy these Christians seemed to find in one another.

The epistle to the Ephesians focuses upon the new dynamic level which this transforming power has introduced: "But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace who hath made us one, and broken down the middle wall of partition." There is no middle wall of partition that can permanently resist this unique leavening power of divine fellowship once it is loosed. For it levels barriers of race, of nation, of class, of personality-type, and is only intensified by persecution. Those who would exalt race or nationality or class as sacred and enduring "orders" do well to dread and hate real Christian fellowship. For it is, and will remain, their greatest enemy. They set rigid limits within which the organic association shall operate. Real Christian fellowship dissolves away those limits and denies their ultimacy. Christian fellowship betrays them to their national and racial and class enemies by loving beyond the statutory limits of "natural" boundaries. Here is already the germ of a world fellowship, with already the germ of unlimited liability to those in the fellowship wherever they may be and with a sense of responsibility so to act toward others who are not yet in the fellowship that they may be drawn toward, not forever repelled from entering the fellowship. This last aspect has clear witness in the refusal of Jesus to use means that would forever obscure His end.

This Christian fellowship is not exclusively dependent for its continued existence upon the organic bonds of association. It is not terminated when they break or unite or break again. It is centered in One who is eternal and who in patience forever draws up the bearers of these bonds into another setting. Even in the world of outward history this Christian fellowship is no abstraction, no visionary ideal. For the frail and feeble specimens of this

Christian fellowship which we have known in the last nineteen hundred years have again and again exhibited, and exhibit in a few places today, a potential revolutionary release of power and devotion which none of the existing limited organic associations have ever approached. And ever within this Christian fellowship has been this outthrust against any organic limits, and this concern for the travailing souls of all. Again and again the Christian fellowship, like the early Franciscan order, has been reckless about the preservation of its own life and has released its most devoted members to go to the ends of the earth to share its discovery with others.

#### CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP AND THE STARVATION FOR COMMUNITY

Today its potential transforming power seems to be awakening again. The fact that Christian fellowship has become so weak as to allow it to be identified with the organic associations of the time, and on their terms, not its own; that it has supinely acquiesced in the violent ruptures of the common life, the wars that its own nation or state has periodically engaged in; that its own members have so rarely felt a real dependence upon each other that would expose them to an experience of vital interaction upon a new principle of unlimited liability for each other—all of these facts reveal its present frailty. But cells of quickened fellowship that are prepared to risk the displeasure of the organic associations of their time, to keep the unity with those whom their countrymen have been persuaded to hate, and to discover in the persecution that follows what unlimited liability to each other really means, are not unknown today in Germany, in Russia, here and there in Japan; and without the same persecution, they are rousing themselves in India, in England, and in America.

The so-called civilized world is once more hungering for a deeper sense of community. The German Youth Movement, the titanic Russian attempt to fashion a new regimented economic state on this hunger, the Fascist offering of the barrack-camaraderie form of community, the Oxford Groups with their hearty patterned form of religious community, the hunger American college students show for a real experience of community in the Quaker summer work camps—these are all symptoms of this existing starvation for community. J. H. Oldham's words are worth repeating: "We need a witness to the true meaning of community. There is no witness of which the world stands in greater need today. Over against a self-seeking individualism on the one hand and an impersonal collectivism on the other, the

Christian faith proclaims that the true meaning and satisfactions of life are found in the relation of persons to persons. It finds the ground for this assertion not in any merely human longing for fellowship, but in the fact that God has entered into personal relations with men calling them into communion with Himself—thereby to responsible selfhood." (*The Question of the Church in the World Today*, pp. 12-13.)

Yet even J. H. Oldham's fine statement lays too little emphasis upon the evangel that calls men not only to communion with God and to responsible selfhood, but to vital fellowship with each other. The real witness that can speak to this hunger for community in the world today and that can judge these existing pseudo-forms of community, is the presence of cells of Christians whose fellowship is centered in the God whom Christ revealed. The members of these cells must show to the world an unlimited liability toward each other, a willingness to allow *all* of their life interests—biological, economic, esthetic, and intellectual—to come into this fellowship and to be refocused there; a readiness, if need be, to suffer outward loss and to take active initiative in leveling the barriers that prevent the sharing of this transforming fellowship with all the peoples of the world.

Because this form of community knows no limits and no conditions of termination, McGavran's word of immediate peace strategy is less irrelevant than most of such appeals: "We shall not achieve a permanently warless world, until large, intelligent, and powerful minorities in India, China, Russia, and other lands are disciples of Jesus Christ. . . . Christians with a conscience against war." (P. 126, January, 1936, *International Review of Missions*.) Yet before and after men have ceased to destroy each other by arms the spread of the Christian fellowship must go on. For it is of the nature of its calling to be shared and it is the destroyer of limits that even a warless world has still to overcome.

If this Christian fellowship is a much neglected part of the very evangel itself, if its costly demands offer a positive therapy which promises to counteract the tendency to arrested development which stamped so much of the old evangelism, if it can feed the deep hunger of modern man for a vital experience of real community, then no contemporary discussion of the new evangelism can fail to give the Christian group, the Christian cell, the Christian fellowship a central place in its approach.

## The New Place of the Church in Protestant Thinking

SAMUEL MCCREA CAVERT

A FEW weeks ago a graduate of one of our well-known liberal seminaries remarked, "I am announcing a series of eight sermons on the Church; the first is to be on 'The Church the Act of God.'" And he added whimsically, "Eight sermons in succession on the Church—I don't suppose such a thing has happened in Protestantism since the Reformation!"

The remark is symptomatic of a rising sense of the central importance of the Church. Our characteristic Protestant emphasis has been so strongly on the relation of the individual to God that we have tended to take a casual or even depreciatory attitude toward institutional religion. We have thought of it as something which might concern "high" Anglicans and other Catholics, but from which enlightened Protestants have been emancipated.

The reason for this is easily understood. It has been an inevitable reaction against the exaggerated institutionalism of the Roman Catholic view. The protest was natural but nevertheless unfortunate, for in rejecting a false doctrine of the Church we have come perilously near to having no doctrine at all. We have assumed that the individual members give meaning to the Church, whereas the truer view is that the Church of Christ gives meaning to its members. We have failed to realize that, apart from the historic Christian fellowship, no individual can come to the fullness of Christian experience. We have forgotten, too, how essential the institution is for the preservation and the transmission of the faith. Without the organized Church the Christian gospel would always be in danger of becoming diluted into a vague idealism, with no permanent character lasting from generation to generation and no distinctive witness. Without the corporate life of the Church, Christianity would be likely to trickle out into a thin stream and become lost in "the sands of secular society."

Today, happily, a change is taking place in Protestant thinking. After a long period of conceiving the Church chiefly in terms of the social processes of the community we now discover that unless the Church can be different



from the community it has no unique significance for the community. In a day in which our civilization appears to be disintegrating beneath our feet, we are seeking firm standing-ground, not in the thought-forms of modern culture, but in something that transcends that culture. We are accordingly finding a new interest in the interpretation of life that has come down to us in the Church through all the Christian centuries.

This means that we can no longer be satisfied to conceive the Church merely as the sum of its members, a congeries of individuals, a voluntary society, like the Masonic Order or a university, to which men may or may not relate themselves as they prefer and of which they may make what they will. We cannot regard it as a purely human association created by man to meet certain needs. We see it as the creation of God through Jesus Christ. Even if it be granted that Jesus Himself did not contemplate an organized society, there is still a vital and inescapable sense in which He was the founder of the Church, for He inaugurated a way of life which can be realized only in fellowship. Indeed, the Church is more than founded by Christ; it is a part of the "*Fact of Christ*." The Church, as Professor Ernest F. Scott has said, "was integral to Christianity from the very first." "We are not," he comments, "to think of the disciples as deciding, on some given occasion, that they would form a society for the maintenance of their faith; they already constituted a society which had won for itself a sure footing before they were clearly conscious of its existence." Christians belonged to a community—"the community of the Kingdom"—a community which they entered by virtue of their becoming Christians at all.

#### THE GREATEST UNITING FORCE IN THE WORLD

In the language of the Oxford Conference, we should therefore interpret the Church as the "witness to the true meaning of community." Because Christianity proclaims that all men have their origin in one sovereign God, the Church which bears that message stands for the unity of mankind as no other institution can ever do. One may easily sing that

"Man to man the world o'er  
Shall brother be,"

but what reason is there for believing that the song means anything more than a beautiful dream? The ideal of brotherhood is really plausible only if mankind has the source of its life in a Reality that is more ultimate than all

earthly divisions. That is what Christianity dares to declare, and in giving that insight to the world the Church discloses not only the true nature of human personality but also the one adequate basis of society. The Church stands for the inherent "togetherness" of life, a togetherness that is grounded in the very character of the universe.

And this principle of community, to which the Church in its distinctive genius testifies, is precisely what men today are groping after. As J. H. Oldham has incisively pointed out, the craving for community explains in large part why great collectivist movements like Fascism, Nazism and Communism are sweeping across the world. These forces represent a protest against the anarchic individualism of modern life. Each of them gains its power over men just because it claims to afford truer community than they have previously known. But the community which these political movements offer, based only upon one's connection with a particular nation, race or class, is community *limited*. It is therefore false community and results in setting one narrow group over against another. The community which the Church stands for is *universal* community, and it is universal community which we must have if society as a whole is to be saved from disintegration.

The Church, in its intrinsic quality, ought therefore to be seen as potentially the greatest uniting force in the world. The early Christians discovered this in an era when the Roman Empire was going to pieces. In the second century the Epistle to Diognetus referred to Christians as being "scattered in different cities" and then boldly declared that they "hold the world together." "This illustrious position," the writer adds, "was assigned to them of God, which it were unlawful for them ever to forsake." We live in another era of disintegration. Again it is the Church which should have "the illustrious position" of holding the world together. More than is usually realized the Church is fulfilling that function. This becomes more clear when one contrasts it with its contemporary rivals which are bidding for support. Hitler bluntly says, "If any man is not of German blood, he cannot belong to my kingdom." Mussolini says, "If any man is not an Italian nationalist, he cannot belong to my kingdom." Stalin says, "If any man is not of the proletariat, he cannot belong to my kingdom." Over against these divisive voices we hear the voice of One who calls all men into His kingdom, in which the great word is not nation, race or class but "*whosoever*." And in spite of all its divisions and weaknesses, the Church, not merely in theory but in a substantial measure of practice, really stands uniquely for the unity of mankind

which its gospel asserts. For, thanks to the foreign missionary movement, the Church is today the one institution which is rooted in the soil of all the important countries of the globe and includes the most diverse groups of men in its fellowship.

But if the Church is fully to achieve its mission, there are certain great aspects of its original nature, as determined by the Christian gospel itself and its understanding of true community, which we must recover. Fortunately, the Oxford and the Edinburgh Conferences are greatly helping us to do so.

#### SUPRANATIONAL AND SUPRARACIAL

We must interpret the Church as a *supranational* community. This is a conception which Protestantism has too feebly recognized. Associated historically with the rise of great nations, it almost inevitably became organized along national lines and has lived ever since in an atmosphere surcharged with nationalism. As a result we have failed to see the Church as the Body of Christ throughout the world. The loyalties of the average church member have been concentrated on a national denomination or even on a local congregation. He has little sense of the Church as "a universal order of life."

The character of the Church as a community transcending all national divisions is, however, deeply rooted in the New Testament. Even in primitive Christianity the term Church applied to the whole body of those who had been redeemed by Christ. Saint Paul speaks, of course, of the local group—"the Church in Corinth" or "the Church in Philippi"—but (to quote Professor Scott again) "from the outset the Church was understood universally and each fraction of it was a 'church' in so far as the part was a miniature of the whole." Even when Christianity was still an obscure movement and only a few congregations existed, the Epistle to the Ephesians did not present the Church as merely local or national but in exalted language described it as the organ through which God is to accomplish His redemptive purpose for all mankind. Thus in the Church a new kind of community came into being—and not merely as a heavenly ideal but as a visible entity. "Here" (in the words of a familiar description) "the Gentile met the Jew whom he had been accustomed to regard as an enemy of the human race; the Roman met the lying Greek sophist, the Syrian slave the gladiator born beside the Danube. In brotherhood they met, the natural birth and kindred forgotten, the baptism alone remembered in which they had been born again to God and to each other."

If we American Christians were today to become conscious of belonging to this kind of a supranational community, we would discover that as *Christians* we have more in common with true fellow Christians of other lands—with Pastor Niemoeller in Germany, with T. Z. Koo in China, with Kagawa in Japan, with Bishop Azariah in India—than with any fellow Americans who do not share the Christian understanding of life. And to foster among Christians this recognition that in belonging to the Church they belong to such a fellowship is the weightiest contribution which the Church in the long run can make to world peace.

On the fateful day in August, 1914, before the ultimatum between England and Germany expired, Dr. Henry Hodgkin of London was saying farewell to the German, Dr. Siegmund-Schultze, in Cologne. As the two men were in the railway station where troop train after troop train was pulling out, the German Christian said to the English Christian, "Whatever may happen, nothing shall come between us." It was the expression of a faith and a fellowship in Christ which united men of different nations beyond the ability of earthly governments to break. What if Christians generally, in all their different countries, should gain the unshakable conviction that the unity of the nation, important as it is, is less important than the unity of the worldwide Body of Christ? What if they should come to feel that the allegiance which they owe to the Universal Church of God is higher than the allegiance which they owe to any nationalist state? If membership in the Church should come to mean this in all nations, then the whole question of finding methods other than war for dealing with international disputes would have to be faced in desperate seriousness. And if, in spite of all efforts to the contrary, war should come, the Church that recognized its own true nature as a world fellowship in Christ would not allow itself to be used as an agent of nationalist propaganda. If a war had to be won, that would be seen as the business of governments, never of the Church. In time of war, as in all other times, the Church would still carry on its own God-given work of reconciliation and redemption and bear its distinctive witness to the oneness of mankind as the family of God.

We must also make it clear that the Church, when faithful to its own genius, is a *supraracial* community. It has its origin in God who has created diverse races and given them their characteristic qualities. It acknowledges as its Lord One who saw that men were to come from North and South, from East and West, to sit down in His kingdom. Its first great interpreter, Saint

Paul, though born into a race with an intense consciousness of its own superiority, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, came to see that in Christ and therefore in His Church there could be no distinction (if we translate his words into modern phrases) between Jew and Aryan, Negro and white, Mongolian and Anglo-Saxon.

Our churches generally have not been blind to their duty to the men of all races. We have sent missionaries who have played a noble part in lifting less privileged peoples to a higher level of life and who have brought men of every race and color into the Church. But the question arises as to what attitude we are to take to the black men and the yellow whom we thus bring into the Christian family. We easily pass resolutions that call for equal treatment of them in civic and economic affairs, but the great contribution of the Church lies on a deeper level. What if the Church in its own life were to set so clear an example of interracial fellowship that the world could not fail to see it? We have to confess that most churches do not do so today. What if Negroes strongly felt in the Church a warmth of fellowship which they do not find in the community at large? What if Jews felt that the Church was one institution where every trace of anti-Semitism had disappeared? What if the Church were visibly to overleap the divisions of race? Its great contribution would then be to demonstrate to an unbelieving world that interracial brotherhood can be a living fact.

#### SUPRACLASS AND SUPRASECT

We must also hold up the conception of the Church as, in its original nature, a *supraclass* community. Since the Christian revelation discloses one God who is the common Father there is no room for artificial social distinctions within the Church that exists to give that witness to the world. Unfortunately, the churches as we know them have too often been recreant to this central principle of their being. Too many of our American churches have become almost one-class institutions. In our rural areas a church may indeed include all kinds of people, but in our great cities, and even more in our complacent suburbs, our churches tend to organize along the lines of social cleavage in the secular world. We do not often see employers and factory workers meeting in the same house of God. The hungry, the insecure and the dispossessed we do not find in large numbers in any church at all.

It is a sobering reflection that the Church's failure to be more truly a supraclass society has resulted in its birthright being stolen by the Com-



munists, who not only proclaim a classless Utopia but proceed with vigor to do something (however mistaken) about it. Their methods we must condemn, along with their godlessness, but at least we must humbly confess that it is our shortcomings as Christians with reference to one great aspect of the gospel and the Church that have given Communism an opportunity which it ought never to have had. Perhaps the rise of Communism, in spite of all its unchristian aspects, should be regarded as one of God's drastic methods of judging the Church and recalling it to its own mission as a supraclass community. In any case, it is only the Church, with its faith in the oneness of humanity under God, which, when it understands its own nature, can be the witness to true community. For the Church knows that it is not economic forces alone—still less physical coercion—which can make a classless society possible, but only the recognition of the unity of all mankind in God.

The Church that adheres to its original genius must also become a *supradenominational* community. As there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," so there must be one fellowship of those who have found in Christ the true meaning of life. No one who is deeply sensitive to this can ever rest permanently content with denominationalism. He may, and should, cherish the great contributions which our major denominations have historically made; but he cannot regard them as ultimates. He may, and should, be eager to preserve all the rich diversity of Christian experience as against the tendencies that would reduce it to a standardized uniformity; but he must ever be pressing on toward an inclusive unity. What form of outward organization the inner oneness should take he may not know. But if Christians really have a common spirit, there must be some body through which that spirit can be manifested to the world. Still more, if Christians possess a common faith there must be some way of bearing witness to it.

And if there is one thing which was clearer than another in the world conferences of 1937 it is that Christians have a common faith. Oxford showed that the members of the most widely sundered churches really share a common world-view, which stands out in vivid contrast with the secular world-views of Communism, Fascism, or scientific naturalism. Beyond that, the Edinburgh Conference revealed that our separated churches actually have a unity of central theological convictions. It is now clear that the things which keep us apart are not differences in the basic fundamentals which make Christianity what it is, but in our conceptions of the ministry and the sacraments. The things in which we all agree are the all-decisive things—our



belief in God and in His redeeming grace through Christ; the things in which we disagree are things of lesser moment. The differences are not to be ignored or obscured, but they must not be allowed to get into the center of the picture. At the very least, they must not prevent such a measure of united witness and united action as is possible through unhesitating and unreserved co-operation.

#### SUPRATEMPORAL AND SUPRANATURAL

The Church must still further be regarded as a *supratemporal* community. With all our modern emphasis on what the Church means for the life of man here and now, we cannot be true to the New Testament unless we remember that the fellowship to which the Church witnesses is an eternal fellowship. The Church views man as a citizen not merely of an earthly society, but of the abiding City of God. Not until we reach this point do we come to the ultimate parting of the ways between the Church's teaching and secular political philosophies like Fascism and Communism. They think of man as made for the State and as finding his complete fulfillment in the service of earthly ends. Christianity sees man as created by God for an immortal destiny. With all its interest in the temporal welfare of men, there is a valid sense in which the Church must always be otherworldly. This does not mean any lessened concern with man's present life. On the contrary, the very conception of man as an immortal soul so exalts his inherent worth as to afford the deepest of all impulses to human brotherhood and concern for human welfare.

We need a rekindled interest in the affirmation of the creed, "I believe in the communion of saints." This doctrine, precious to Catholics, has been seriously undervalued by most Protestants, but without it we can have no adequate conception of the Church. Any view of the Church which is confined to the Church of our own generation—or even to the Church on earth—is defective. We must think of ourselves as belonging to a living fellowship which includes the redeemed of all the ages and unites us with the great souls of all the Christian centuries, those here and those who have passed from our sight though not from God's.

But we are not likely really to regard the Church as supranational, supracial, supraclass, supradenominational and supratemporal unless we see it as *supranatural*. I use the word literally, as describing something that transcends the empirical and temporal order with which science deals. I say "supranatural" rather than "supernatural" because the older term seems to

some to carry misleading implications. But whatever word we use it must be one which clearly indicates that the Church springs from the nature of God rather than from the nature of man, that it is not merely a part of the human structure which we build, but is rooted in the Divine Reality. It owes its existence not simply to our wills and aspirations but to God's initiative. It rests upon the faith that man has not been left to grope blindly for some clue of life's meaning, but that a Word of God has been spoken in Christ which gives light and guidance and redemption. The Church, in other words, is not just an expression of human culture—not even the highest expression!—but “rests upon a revelation by which all culture must be judged.”

To think of the Church as a supranatural society will save us from falling prey to the constant temptation of reducing its witness to the level of contemporary civilization. The present situation in Germany is illuminating at this point. Why is it that the Confessional Church has been able to stand, at the price of martyrdom, against the forces that try to coerce its message into accord with the Nazi formula of “blood and soil”? It is only because there have been enough Christians of insight in Germany who have seen clearly that the Church has a message and a character derived from Christ that cannot be compromised. All the other institutions in Germany—the great universities, the press, the labor unions, drama and literature—have taken on the color of the racialistic outlook which regards the German blood as the absolute standard. Everything in Germany has fallen under this spell—everything except the Church. The Church alone has stood against this trend because the Church has known that the ultimate source of its life is not in any racial or national culture, but in a supranatural world. Soon or late the Church in America may have to face a similar crisis. To face it successfully, the Church must have come to a clear consciousness of itself as a creative act of God designed to bear the revelation which alone can save the world.

Because the Church is supranatural the supreme expression of its life is worship. Being of more than finite origin and existing for more than finite ends, it must always be oriented toward God and His sovereign purpose for mankind. It is only through worship that its essential nature is preserved and its true life constantly renewed.

#### HOLY, CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC

The new and higher understanding of the Church of which we have been speaking is leading us to a fuller appreciation of the classic “notes” of

the Church as expressed in the great affirmations of the Creeds. More than we had realized a few years ago, we believe in one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

The Church of Christ is *Holy*. Obviously not morally perfect as it exists today—far, far from it—but “holy” in the sense of having been brought into being by the call of God for a divine purpose; “holy” in the sense of being a continuation of the Incarnation of God in Christ. It is constituted not merely by the decisions of men but by the will of God, and the quality which its life should express is fixed not by our preferences but by the character of its Lord.

The Church of Christ is *Catholic*. The word has such narrow and specialized connotations in some quarters that many have ceased to use it. But in the basic sense it affirms something which we all must hold—the wholeness of the Christian faith and the universality of the Christian fellowship. Archbishop Söderblom of Sweden used to remind us that in addition to the three well-recognized types of Catholics (Roman, Greek and Anglican) there is a fourth—“Evangelical Catholics,” more commonly called Protestants. The phrase is a felicitous one. While affirming what the Reformers affirmed in their emphasis on the Evangel, it asserts that we treasure also the whole inheritance of Christ and His Church. The word “ecumenical” which has recently come into popular use is another way of saying essentially what the adjective “Catholic” says.

The Church of Christ is *Apostolic*. It is a fellowship which unites us in an unbroken succession with the people of Christ in all the nineteen centuries since the days of the apostles. The Church is not something which our own generation produces; it is continuous with the original community that came into existence through Christ. There are widely different conceptions as to how that continuity has been historically safeguarded or is to be safeguarded today. But the fact of apostolicity is something that we must all cherish, however divergent our views as to the method of securing it. The Church is also “apostolic” in its mission; it is “sent out” (which is what the Greek phrase literally means) to evangelize the world and bear witness to the gospel. In this secondary sense also we must assert the apostolic character of the Church, especially so in a day in which rival “gospels” are being proclaimed with all the ardor of missionary passion by secular movements as a substitute for the Christian revelation of the nature of reality and of man.

## THE TENSION WITHIN THE CHURCH

Perhaps most readers will at this point say, "All this is a beautiful picture of the Church as it ought to be, but what connection is there between it and the churches which we actually *see*? The Church which you describe is only a Utopian ideal; it has nothing to do with the realities of the world. The real Church is made up of the same people who make up the community-at-large, and so reflects all the prejudices, the narrowness and the sub-Christian outlook of secular society."

To that criticism the reply must be made that the Church, rightly conceived, is never *merely* the sum of the practices and attitudes of those who happen to constitute its present membership. It is something more than a Church of men; it is the Church of Christ. As such, it has a *given* quality derived from its origin in Him. That *givenness*, springing from the Word of God spoken through Christ, provides an unchanging standard by which the churches of our rearing must always be tested and remade. A tension is therefore set up in every age between the churches as we find them in society and the Church which is a part of the Christian revelation. It is the existence of that strain between the will of God for the Church and what men have made of the Church that is the perpetual source of its renewal. So long as the Church is a place of conscious tension between the demands of the gospel and the practice of the world, so long may we expect the empirical churches to become more truly the Church of Christ.

# The Will of God

J. EDGAR PARK

THE idea underlying all religions is the same. It is this—that we and the world around us show signs of somebody's mind and imagination having been at work on us and it, that the entire process does not seem to be entirely haphazard, but to have some kind of unity about it. It is "a world I never made." It is true that you must look at the world as if it had some meaning, otherwise you will never find any meaning in it. A thing known is known according to the mode of the knower. The things you know have a likeness to the things themselves but also a likeness to you.

The jellyfish knows the cosmos has no backbone. The rat finds the whole world looking back at him with furtive eyes. The polecat has to confess after its experience that life is not sweet. The cow chews its cud and the ant finds the machine in which it fits as a cog. The world to the jazz hound sounds like an age of "saxophones moaning for a comforter." Yet many a dog finds the world full of friends, with more than he can understand of comradeship in their voices and their eyes, and the meadow lark hears the world full of music. You see what you are.

Religious people have felt that there is such a meaning, a purpose working in everything. They call this purpose the will of God. They believe if you live opposed to this purpose that you will never get any real satisfaction out of life. If, however, you live along the line of the will of God you will have a thrilling time in spite of every obstacle and difficulty and tragedy, and your life will command the respect and admiration of others.

That is the idea underlying nearly all religions—the trick of doing the will of God. Dante says, "*In His Will is our peace.*"

But where shall we find what the will of God for us is? There are those who profess to make this very simple for us.

Years ago the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University in England, hearing that the Eastern Counties Railway Company was proposing to run excursion trains to Cambridge on Sundays, wrote to the railway company this letter:

"Sir: I am credibly informed that the Eastern Counties Railway Company are instituting a service of excursion trains to Cambridge on Sundays, bringing with them

foreigners and other undesirable persons. Allow me to inform you that this must be as displeasing to Almighty God as it is to myself, the other heads of houses and all right-thinking Christians. Your obedient servant."

Now you see how simple this makes things. The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge knows what the will of God for the railway company is and he tells them. The trouble about this simplification of the problem is, of course, How does the railway company know that the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge really knows what the will of God for the railroad company is?

There are many people in the world who consider themselves either officially or personally competent to inform you what the will of God for you is. The difficulty lies in their credentials. How do they happen to know this about you when you yourself are not clear on the matter? A visitor to a wealthy man said, "I have been sent by God to tell you that you are to give a million dollars to the cause in which I am interested." The philanthropist answered to his visitor, "That is most interesting, but would it not have been a more businesslike procedure if the Lord had communicated His will in this matter to me also?—and I assure you He has not done so."

This problem is a very old one. Meister Eckhart, who was born before the year 1260, says: "The statement that our Lord from time to time holds converse with good people and that they hear words or become impressed with certain sayings . . . should be accepted with reserve and the communications judged on their merits, for locutions of this kind are often due to a trick the soul has, when indulging in comfortable intuition of divinity, of answering herself by a kind of reflex action. . . . Anything in the soul which can be expressed in rational language is not said by God. God's speech is in the experience when the spirit is caught up out of its self into a higher intellectual experience."

What a modern remark for an old monk who lived most of his life in the thirteenth century! That is the first fact about the will of God. I believe Dante was right when he said our only peace is to find and follow God's will for us. But Meister Eckhart was also right when he held that the main way in which God reveals Himself to us is through rousing, unifying, deepening our own powers of thought and feeling, the fusing of all our experience, knowledge, imagination and will into a unity so that we can think and feel the problem out for ourselves. Our prayer should not be, "God, tell me



what to do!" Our prayer should be, "O God, help me to get this thing straight."

God's answer to our prayer for guidance is given us when we are enabled to meet our problems with our *whole* selves, not with our intellect merely, not with our feelings alone—but with both. We must learn to think with the feelings, and feel with the brain.

Part of the mystic experience of religion of which so much has been written and sung is this welding of your own powers into a higher unity so that the brain does not leave the feelings behind, nor the feelings gaze behind the bars of baffled hate at the cold operation of the brain, but all is fused into a unity and you feel more deeply because you think and understand more clearly. In such a way God reveals His will to you.

One of the hardest problems is concerned with the technique of inviting, tempting the moment of inspiration, this experience of keener insight, fruitful imagination, clearer understanding. What the artist seeks in a great picturesque way, all of us need in our everyday lives. This power of ceasing to be lost in particulars, in details, in the dull and meaningless, and rising to some peak of vision from which one can survey things, and, as we say, "see one's way." Our whole form of language bears out the assertion which Meister Eckhart makes about such experiences. He says that when they came to him he felt he had no property in them and no idea of ownership. We say in the same manner that "an idea has come to us," or that "we have hit upon it."

There seems to be something automatic about the appearance in us. It pops up, so to speak—whether after long research, or prayer, or deep thought, it pops up in the mind, reminding one of the sales total in the glass window of a cash register. And yet there is no ordered rank of keys, one of which can be struck to bring a certain figure up out of the depths into the light of day. We are left so helpless, without any method by which we can induce the needed suggestion, generalization, or idea. Doctor Crothers used to tell of how he received through the mail an advertisement of a Dictionary of Thoughts. The circular began with the words, "How often have you found yourself in need of a thought!" Well, here was the solution of your problem, you simply opened the dictionary and there was a thought. The difficulty was, however, as he pointed out, that it was not the thought you wanted. Walking round the room expecting something to come does seem to waste a lot of time and is not very effective. The natural man reacts to the whole

situation with worry, anxiety; one must see some way out of this and one cannot do so, and the mood of worry seems too often to destroy any hope of the inspiration so much needed at the time. The only rule of thumb which common sense has reached on the problem is that it is a good thing to gather all the elements of the problem together in your mind, look at them from every point of view, and then consign them to your mind to see what it can do about them, then think of something else. When you come back to them again after a good night's sleep, sometimes it is found that the mind without saying anything to anybody has been working overtime and has cleared things up a bit. There are indications that the authors of the book of Psalms found this method of value, and that the enemies ranged against you at night like a wholly invincible host seemed more vulnerable in the morning.

But Meister Eckhart goes much deeper into the situation. He holds that the universe only co-operates with a motive of which it approves. Mr. Coomaraswamy has pointed out that Meister Eckhart was always striking facts which have a far wider application than their context and the language in which they are expressed would lead the casual reader to appreciate. He hits pretty near the heart of the problem when he holds that it is the motive which lies back of your need of help and inspiration which determines whether you will find one of these automatic suggestions popping up in your mind. He says, "Man ought not to work for any why, not for God nor for His glory nor for anything at all that is outside him, but only for that which is his being, his very life within him."

In other words, the will of God is revealed to you, the light of inspiration dawns upon you when the necessity for it is a part of your very being, when everything within you has been built up to receive that capstone and waits for it. The attempt to force the moment simply because of fear of consequences, or necessity of immediate personal success, is almost fruitless. This heightening of one's powers comes to one whose natural powers have already been developed up to the highest point in that direction of which one has been capable. "We need three things in our work," he says: "To be orderly, honest and wise. To do the next thing, that I call orderly. By honest I mean doing one's best at the moment. To feel true and lively pleasure in good work, that I call wise. Where these three things are found they are just as good and unite us as closely to God as all Mary's idle longings" (II: 95).

One way of reaching God is to do the next thing, to do it as well as you possibly can, and to do it with that pleasure which means that your whole self

is going into it. Instead of walking the room in a dim maze, define your aim and materials and motive a little more clearly to yourself, and perhaps in so doing the missing capstone will leap into its place. The materials are all there. The motive which would fuse them and make them significant and bring them to life is all that is needed. Ernest Bertram says the saddest thing in modern life is to be seen in the rows of madonnas in our museums with no one to worship them. We have all the gifts and resources, and all we can do with them is the exhibitionism of the glass case. They are meant to be used for some great end, and in the use transformed and glorified. The universe will not co-operate with you unless it is satisfied that you are its kind of person. Then in some mysterious way inspiration flows through you. What do we know of the characteristics of God which would enable us to become His kind of person? Here again the quiet voice of Meister Eckhart makes things far too plain for our comfort. He says God has no style. "God's only idiosyncrasy is being." And as if to make things clear he speaks of martyrs who lost their life and found their being. That vibration, that inspiration which you need, that revelation of the will of God, comes to you not because you want it or wishfully think of it, but only when you *are* in tune for the reception of that impulse which thrills your being. Like communicates itself to like. "When God created all creatures He could not move in them, they were so small and narrow. But the soul He made so like Himself, so nearly His own peer, on purpose to give Himself to her."

Meister Eckhart feels that this operation is in most cases as automatic as a law of nature. "Think not," he says, "it is with God as with a human carpenter, who works or works not as he chooses, who can do or leave undone at his good pleasure. It is not thus with God; but finding thee ready, He is obliged to act, to overflow into thee.—Nature reaching her summit, God dispenses His grace.—Forsooth it was a very grave defect in God if, finding thee so empty and so bare, He wrought no excellent work in thee nor primed thee with glorious gifts."

The prayer that God hears for help is the prayer of your being, of what you are, your motive and aim, and most of all your readiness and need of that illumination and revelation which is the magic of all true art. If the ideas come not it is because *you* are not yet ready for them. The runlet of your being has not yet crept down quite far enough to reach the sea.

And yet, and yet, while this is all true, and none of the tools of art can do great things without it, it has always seemed to me that there is a kind of

interim ethic, a kind of uncovenanted mercy which God shows to those who bear heavy burdens and are deeply engrossed in the responsibilities of life. The old idea of the miraculous had something sound at its core—it is the conviction that man must not bind God's freedom by his own conceptions of God's habitual ways of working. The region of religion always lies beyond our understanding of any way of God, or any law. Great achievement perhaps comes only to those who discover and obey the laws, but comfort, forgiveness, communion come to all imperfect things.

Meister Eckhart speaks much of emptiness, need, humility, but for him these are great achievements to be attained only by the great artist, the saint detached from all earthly things. Such ideals should be held up before us. But life is full of suggestions that God does not always work in these almost automatic ways. He does not wait until man has fulfilled all the conditions before He stoops to help. He is not only our goal, He is also our companion upon the way. Even to us whose best is tainted with so many childish traces of credit for ourselves, and posing for the photographer, and bureau drawers of personally owned toys—even for us there is a God. Even before we open the door of our hearts He seems to be with us, stirring in us a divine discontent with ourselves, a longing to go further along the path of His law toward that meeting with Him on His own ground. He gives us all glimpses at times of the way we might go, of the being we might be.

Princes Street, Edinburgh, is one of the most distinguished streets in the world, on one side lined with goodly buildings, and having on the other side green lawns reaching slowly up the hillside surmounted by the ancient pile of Edinburgh Castle. When the Scotch planned to make a memorial for all those of their nation who had died in the Great War they took an unused wing of their ancestral castle and turned it into the Caledonian War Memorial. As one enters one finds the whole story of the war retold in carved stone, painted glass and molten bonze, so that beginning at the door and going around, every detail of that great struggle is brought again to remembrance. The floor of the chapel ceases in the center and the eternal rock of the hills comes up through it: on that rock the shrine containing the names of all the Scotch dead is preserved for all time.

It happened that I went round the memorial preceded by a soldier who had been blinded in the war. His guide and companion was a young Oxford undergraduate who lifted the blind man's hands so that he could touch this wondrous story in the carvings which surrounded all the walls. That blind

man could see with his hands far more clearly than most of the rest of us who had no direct part in these things could see with our eyes. One could see his hand pause at the barbed wire, at the mice and canaries, called the tunnelers' friends, because their extreme susceptibility to gas warned their human companions to fly for safety while there was still time. So with blind hands he saw all the most harrowing, agonizing and terrifying experiences of his life wrought here into lines of eternal beauty. The concluding scene was a prophecy of the end of war—the broken sword. The right hand held the broken hilt, the left hand the broken blade, and together they made a cross through which one could see a vision of the peaceful valley of the world where all men lived in kindness with each other and peace had come and war was no more. People were interested in more important things and had not time to think of war.

And that fair young man who led the blind soldier around the memorial, transmuting for him all the worst experiences of life into terms of eternal beauty, is for us the picture of what the Church should be, lifting our blind hands of uncertain faith and dimmed vision to feel and see all life's experiences transmuted and glorified by some magic skill, and the vision of some great future. Our hands, the hands of common men and women engaged in everyday, often discouraging, tasks, are lifted by the Church to feel that through the experiences of every passing day, often sordid and mean, there do pass these lines of eternal beauty, culminating at last in something seen through a broken sword and an uplifted cross, a vision of a land of eternal beauty. Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man (to conceive) the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

NOTE: The best English version of Meister Eckhart is by C. deB. Evans, in two volumes (London: Watkins. 1924-1931). There is an inexpensive German version, *Meister Eckehart Schriften* (Eugen Diederich's Verlag, Jena). The complete works are in process of publication (W. Kohlhammer. Stuttgart).

## Jesus' Way in Our Time

HORACE T. HOUF

**I** AM no more a Christian than Pilate was, yet I see no way out of the world's misery but the way which would have been found by Christ's will." Thus wrote Bernard Shaw a few years ago. It is interesting to know this keen man's opinion of this matter, and there are many who would agree with him. But it leaves unspecified what were the main aspects of that will of Christ which might have led us out of the world's misery; and those are the main things we need to know. There is no doubt that the misery continues. But the way or ways out, that is the rub. It is greatly worth-while for us to try to understand what was Jesus' way, and how it may or may not work in our time.

We are not here working at a theory of the person of Christ. We are not dealing directly with theology. Jesus lived His life and did His work in a concrete time and place, and of that life there are records which give the main points. It is that life, its ways and some of its practical implications, that we are to consider. Even with them we shall deal only partially, but that is where we must start. For serious consideration of the doctrine of His person there is a place. And we take for granted the importance of every right-minded person's committing his life profoundly in devotion to Christ. But having done that he must then ask, What next? and What next? And that must be asked, again and again. Only thus will his devotion be implemented in ways that make his fundamental loyalty effective. And if his devotion to Jesus be not such as to work in everyday life and society, then it is of little worth, to others at least, even if it might be worth something to himself. A faith in Christ that makes no practical differences is negligible, and will inevitably come to be recognized as such.

What Jesus actually was about as a person in history—it is that about which we must know for a sound understanding of the meanings of His way for our time. He lived for a third of a century there in Palestine. He was born into a situation, political, economic, social, and religious, with which He became familiar and into which He projected His own life and program. The environment, in all its aspects, affected His life and thought; and He, in turn, vigorously challenged the existing situation and left His impress



upon it and upon succeeding generations. Jesus found diverse and widespread expectations alive among His people, both as to the great coming kingdom of God and the Messiah through whom it was to come. History had worked such contradictory fortunes for the Jews that they had largely given over the hope of being able to realize the divine promises to them, except by the direct and miraculous intervention of God in their behalf. There seemed no way for them to win except for God to break into the world for them and bring the Kingdom to pass. Jesus knew these common hopes. He rejected the nationalistic ways toward the Kingdom; and He seemed at times to have a premonition of the likely fate of His country and its capital, which came to pass in A. D. 70. Jesus believed the Kingdom was to be a new humanity in a renewed world, made so by the marvelous power of God. In that new day, righteousness and peace and piety would prevail. The coming of the Kingdom could mean nothing but grief and destruction for those who were unprepared for it. Only those could hope to enter who were fit. They must be religiously right and morally noble. The Kingdom was to come soon. And toward its coming He had important functions. It was His to announce its imminence, to prepare as many as possible for its coming (by shocking them into repentance and righteousness), and supremely it was His to inaugurate the Kingdom among men. That might be done by vigorous reformatory means, but it appeared more likely to mean His death for the cause. If so, then He must come again in power and glory. At that time God would unmistakably bring in the Kingdom. So Jesus gave Himself with all His mind and might to preparing as many as He could for this coming Kingdom, and He gave himself unreservedly to the actual inauguration of the kingdom of heaven among men. He was wholly given to it, and was prepared to pay whatever price the work required. Such were His program and His spirit.

#### SHALL WE IMITATE JESUS?

The way in which He lived that life is known to us, and His main teachings we know. We are speaking of the Jesus of history. The records tell us of His way. Our chief problem then becomes the bringing of that way into our own lives in our time and place, assuming, of course, that we are also to have in us the spirit and the aims of Jesus. How are we to give effect among us to that kingdom of God which He inaugurated by His life and teaching and death? What is it to mean in our individual lives, and in the world of today? If Christ's will might have saved the world from its misery, what was

that will of Christ, and how does it work in our world and generation? The answer most often given in the past has been to commit ourselves to the divine person of Christ and then, by God's help, imitate Him in our lives. And many noble things have been said and done in imitation of Jesus. In some situations and ways imitation may be good. But much stronger procedures than that are required today if the Kingdom is to be approximated among us in our vastly complex world.

There are some considerations that make against the adequacy of imitation of Jesus as a way for our time. We shall mention them without elaboration. For one thing, He lived in a very simple society. It was an agricultural and small-town civilization. Their population was small and sparse; their cities were unimpressive. Trade and the practical vocations were engaged in. Farming, shepherding, fishing, and fruitgrowing were among their main pursuits. There was some travel and intercourse with other nations on a restricted basis. And the society was also traditional. It rejected the culture of Greece and the rule of Rome, as much as possible. Three great fields of learning, which now inescapably affect our thinking about life and religion, had not then been developed. The critical study of the text and canon of the Old Testament had not yet been made (much less that of the New Testament, which was only then about to be written). The people of His day dealt with their old Bible traditionally. Then, too, the comparative study of the several religions, with all that that means for us, was absent from their thought, and from His. Not only so, but the great philosophies of the Greek world seem not to have figured much with them or Him. The Epicurean and Stoic views, and those of Plato and Aristotle, what were they to a people who had the word of God, and to whom divine promises assured the coming of a great new day, and that right soon?

Between Him and us there has also intervened the coming of the scientific age. From astronomy has come the Copernican revolution, with its charting of the solar system and the heavenly bodies, and the putting of our earth in its proper place in the world. Earth no longer snugly rests as the center of all that is and as a specially made habitation for God's people. From biology has come the evolving of the theory of evolution, organic and other. And with that is the realization that man is closely bound to all that lives, a true son of mother nature, and an animal, albeit he is an animal with a soul, which may aspire to sonship to God. And from psychology there have come more recently those questions and understandings which even yet

are not clearly understood, so far as their substantial significance for religion goes. What the soul may be, and what the chances for immortality are, are questions which the newer psychologists will raise, and cannot answer. These immensely influential sciences and their findings did not exist in Jesus' day. Today they cannot be ignored.

The situation is equally impressive when the applied sciences are considered. Transportation has been revolutionized by steamboats, railways, automobiles, and airplanes. Communication has been immensely quickened and facilitated by telegraph, telephone, cable, and radio. The comforts of living have multiplied a thousand fold. And the provisions for entertainment (which means preoccupation), as in the movies and radio, are irresistible. And along with theoretical and applied science, have come also the democratic participation in government, and the giving of education to the common people.

To these monumental changes since Jesus' day must be added the fact that from Jesus' life there were absent some experiences and relations which render the imitation of Him impracticable. He was not a married man. That He was a man to whom sex and affection were real, there is no reason to doubt. But the intimate adjustments of marriage and parenthood He never had to make. The ultimate responsibility for rearing a family He never assumed, although His place in Joseph's family gave Him some knowledge of this. The frugalities and insecurity of the industrial or agricultural worker of today, He did not experience; nor could He then. The hazards and restrictions that hedge about the extensive enterpriser of today were quite unknown to Him. And in His experience there was no realization of the unrelenting pressure of our money economy and the scheming exploitation of the consumer today. The society in which He lived was too simple and the human relations too direct for any adequate realization of these pressures on common men, as they are now.

#### PUTTING PERSONS ALWAYS FIRST

All these considerations make it apparent that imitating Jesus as He was is not the way. And yet no other proposal for mankind has in it so much of hope and possibility as does His vision of the coming of the kingdom of God among men. The building of the brotherhood, and great fellowship of man, embodied in that grand ideal, is today the most worth-while, the most challenging goal that the world knows about. And with all that can be said

against undue idealism, and about the obstacles in the way, and so forth, and so forth, and with full cognizance of the state of things upon the earth at present, there is no substitute in sight for this great enterprise, for those who love God and their fellows and want to do something about it. In their own lives and in their countries and throughout the world the kingdom of God must be worked for. That was what Jesus was about when He was here.

But if imitating Jesus is not the way, there is another. And that is to ascertain His living principles, bring them into our time and place, and make them work. Without accepting as ours the accidents that adhered to His central purpose and program, we may still hold to the main objective which He pursued and the principles and spirit by which He worked for it; and where we are we may definitely help to bring about that Kingdom.

Perhaps the most fundamental of all His principles was His conviction of the supreme worth of every person. He took the largest possible view of life and of man. He saw His fellows *sub specie aeternitatis*. He viewed them as God does. And to Him every man, woman, and child was precious. Each was a real candidate for membership in the coming Kingdom. Each was a moral personality, with worth and possibilities, and with rights. His challenge to co-operate with the reign of God among men was given to all persons, regardless of outward conditions. Man as man was the supreme value, and Jesus' sternest strictures against His opponents were because of their artificial ways of judging men. To Him no interest or practice or institution was of sufficient worth to justify its hindrance of men from responding to the challenge of the Kingdom. Nothing He could think of was of enough worth to compare with man who stands at the top in real importance.

This is the principle. Many think it is the prime one. If it is, then Jesus' way in our time would require that we put man as man foremost and keep him always there; not alone for what he is, but for what he may become. And that principle has large meanings for today. It gets rough treatment in these times. One of the most fundamental ways it has developed through the years is in regard to formal freedom. From the slavery that prevailed in Jesus' day, through the medieval feudal stratifications, to the repressions of this twentieth century, man's cry for freedom has been a persistent and potent one. Much progress has been made, politically and in other ways, toward freedom. Yet in recent years there has been a titanic turning back from political freedom; and other forms also are endangered. Government and the individual are a controversial and disturbing polarity in these days.

And it is by no means certain that the individual will be able to hold even the rights which have thus far been gained for him, against the engulfing claims and powers of totalitarianism. Whether the State exists for the individuals or the individuals for the State, that is the question. It may not be exactly put, but it is not far wrong, as things now stand. And that concerns chiefly man's freedom from too much government and from restrictions which life really does not require.

In education the situation is hardly more decided. From the humanitarianism of the last century we inherited the opinion that all persons could take and were entitled to a good education. There was a widespread, lurking notion that man was indefinitely perfectible. And democratic society had taken on itself the burden of providing for all persons an education up through the high school, if not through the university. Then came experimentation with mental tests; and the critical demands incident to the World War. From examination of millions of us, it was discovered that there was striking diversity of native ability as well as differences in actual attainment. Stimulated by the course of events, these tests for intelligence, for personality, and for achievement have convinced many that there are deep and ineradicable variations in human ability. And that affects worth, objectively considered. Not only so, but the mounting costs of so much popular education have led to serious questioning of its advisability. So the supreme worth of persons, each and all, is not so explicitly acceptable in the field of education today.

If some persons resent being known in class work by a number rather than by name, how many more are they who dislike being known in industry by an employment number and being regulated by a time clock. In industry and business the individual is not the prime consideration at the present time. Fortunate is the individual who can attain enough importance and autonomy to escape being just one more cog in the vast industrial machine. Five thousand men, ten thousand men work in a single factory. In a single industry may be hundreds of thousands or even a million men and women. And the industry is run for them? They are the human factor in industry. Each of them lives, strives, aspires, and wins or loses as an individual. But in the compelling economic machinery of today he is just one more hired hand. His employment is provided by an impersonal corporation. Those who manage it are often not those who own it. Indeed, those who own most of it are frequently not those who plan it and determine its policy and procedures. He may work if circumstances are favorable. If times are slack, the



plant may not run. He then is free to do something else! If the terms of employment are not satisfactory, he is free to go elsewhere (where the conditions are the same). We are leagues away from the place and time when industry and business put human individuals first and keep them there.

The late Dr. John Earl, who was for several years the president of Des Moines University, once told about an experience of his as a young man. As a husky lad in his teens, he went to work in a coal mine in Wales. After he had worked in the mine several months, one day an accident occurred. It shut several men and mules in the mine. Communication with the outside world was broken. After hours of misery and anxiety, during which the entrapped men could not know whether they would ever get out alive, communication again was established. And the first words of the owner of the mine, as he called down, were, "Are the mules alright?" Those words so burned themselves into the mind of John Earl that he then and there vowed he would never enter a mine again for an employer as long as he lived. So he came out, to make something better of himself. The employer asked first about the mules. That was blatant and intolerable. Yet the attitude it represented is too prevalent everywhere for us to be very comfortable about the principle of putting persons always first.

The same situation prevails in international affairs. The biggest business in the world for hundreds of years has been the preparing for and waging of wars. Every nation of considerable size has been working at it. Yet war is the classic example of the denial of individual human worth. It is so persistent and so terrible that to mention it is to show how little the individual is allowed to weigh as against demands by the powers that be. And the world is at present in the toils of this monster almost worse than before. It is the most horrible of the several big ways in which individual worth is denied in practice. The way of Jesus would put persons first and keep them there. In education and government and business and international life that is not done often enough and well enough in our time.

#### THE ACTUAL PRACTICE OF LOVE

Another of the basic principles of Jesus is that all shall live by the spirit of love. As He saw it, this was the first and greatest of all commandments. It included the whole of the law and the prophets. If one lived by love, all other things came along with it. That love was properly for oneself, but also equally for others, and for God. And the commandment was for all



men everywhere. It was the one demand He made which was meant to be universal. For all men everywhere and under all conditions, love was to be the law of life. Jesus tried to live by it Himself. How He succeeded the records tell. To the sinners and the sick and sorrowful He brought love like a blessing from above. To the common run of men He appeared as a light and a benediction. To those who opposed Him, either from interest or conviction, He was stern and masterful. His love was not effeminate. His goodness had teeth. He strove to effectuate His love of men by bringing about the conditions which made it possible to live by the spirit of love. For Him it required both the inner spirit and the outer possibility.

And if men are to live by love in our time there are conditions which must prevail to make that possible. Too long has the Christian community devoted itself to the propagation of good will and love, without adequate attention to creating the conditions under which such spirit can take effect. The good life does not thrive in a vacuum. It is not enough to have a sturdy love in one's own heart, though that is primary. That is where it must start, but it must not end there. If it does, we may have the feeling of being very kindly and sweet and helpful, but the hungry still go unfed and the naked unclad; the poor continue in their poverty, and the imprisoned lie yet in chains. No, it is not the way. The cherishing of good will must continue, but it must be implemented for work; it must be canalized into the real world of everyday life. Jesus' way will not prevail if we content ourselves with the worship of God and the nurturing of good will toward all men. These good intentions must take effect. Jesus did something about that in His time; and we should do something where we are. We need not fear that we may go too far, for the forces that will oppose are real and they will withstand us to the last.

We have said that those who are active in the Christian religion have done much to generate personal kindness. There is a consciousness of kind and an almost organic sympathy in human beings which help in this direction. Perhaps few, except the perverted, would not prefer to be kindly and humane (if it didn't cost too much). The spirit of love has come to prevail in family life extensively. It has an important place in most face-to-face groups. But modern life is so much by impersonal and secondary contacts that the chances for such immediate human kindness are greatly reduced. Strange to say, one of the fields in which it often does not prevail is in matters of religion. Among those who care enough about religion to

take it seriously, there is often a peculiar failure of love, because of differing beliefs and controversy. It has at times led to persecution and bloodshed and war. But even worse is it in the actual conduct of politics and business. When political considerations are to the fore, it is likely that love and kindness will be curtailed or forgotten. For, in practice, politics is the machinery for the protection or pushing of economic interests, and when those interests are involved there may be no hesitation nor compromise. So, too, in the field of business proper. "There is no friendship in business." How often we have heard it said, as if it needed to be told. In industry and business man's competition with man becomes most acute. There, if anywhere, will be the rule of tooth and claw. In that arena blood will be spilt. Most often it is "every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost." Only in one great side of life is love less likely to be effective, and that is in international relations, where war is the court of last appeal. When one reflects on the dominance of business in our world and on the ready resort to war by the nations, the distance to be traveled toward the actual practice of love among men can be roughly calculated.

Of course, we will see that love is not just an overflow of emotion. It is built on substantial foundations. We must look about those foundations if we would take love seriously. There must first be justice. Until justice is done, there is no place for talk about love. And that justice will be more than the removal of needless personal and political restraints. It will be the equality of consideration that is due to all human beings, the equalizing of opportunity which every person deserves. It will be economic, particularly in these days; and it will be cultural. Unless justice is provided in those ways, there is no justice worthy of the name, in such a world as this. And beyond justice there will be co-operation, intelligent and honest co-operation; co-operation in those sides of life where it is most really needed. Until men are intelligent and humane enough to take one another into account and to give them justice and co-operation, there is little room for talk about love. Love may motivate these other processes and it may accompany them, but it will also come after as their crown and completion. Jesus saw that to live by love meant the remaking of men and of circumstances; and so it does vastly more in our time.

#### REALIZING ONESELF THROUGH SERVICE

Not only did Jesus put persons always first and insist that all are to

live by the spirit of love, but He taught and acted upon the principle that to realize oneself effectively it must be done through service. Jesus was not a philosopher. He did not use the terminology of the schools. But He clearly saw and tenaciously held to the belief that if a person wanted to realize himself at his true best, wanted to "save his life," to count in the world, he must do it through service to others in his time and place. If a grain of wheat was to bear fruit it must fall into the ground and die. Even the Son of Man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister. And if any man was to be great he must show himself to be the servant of all. After thirty years of experience and reflection, Jesus had deliberately and by the impulsion of God gone out from His trade and community into the vastly more difficult task of heralding and inaugurating the kingdom of heaven among men. He knew what had happened to most of the prophets. He foresaw what was to happen to John, in his day. Yet He took upon Himself this great mission to mankind and went through with it with such magnificent devotion as has not been equalled. He was open-eyed and had counted the cost. He faced the misunderstanding of the common people and the opposition of the authorities and the suspicion of Rome. He lived, preached, taught, healed, and organized in a simple way, for the coming of the kingdom. Having set His face toward the goal, He did not turn back. He could only realize His own mission by going through to the end. He gave Himself completely in service to others, and history has refused to let His name and work be forgotten. "Today there are millions who would die for Him," as Napoleon said.

Perhaps the life of Gautama the Buddha came as near to matching that of Jesus as did any. He was a prince with wealth and sovereignty. Yet he renounced all and became a saintly teacher and friend of men. He disbelieved many things others held precious, but he was so earnest and human and helpful that multitudes found life meaningful because of what he taught and was. Today one hundred and forty million persons in the East speak his name with reverence and live their lives by his teaching and spirit. In a lesser way it has been true all along. Call the roll of the famous men and women of the ages. Name them one by one, and see if it be not true that their greatness is in proportion to their self-giving and their service to their fellows. In their lives they gave themselves and in so doing they found themselves. Each in his own way did this. We may think of such Americans, for example, as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Edison, Booker T. Washington, Jane Addams, Luther Burbank,

and many others. The story is always the same. They served others and in so doing realized themselves. It is a deep and abiding principle of life.

For us it needs to be observed that this serving of mankind will mostly be done through our vocation itself, our business or profession. That is where we live, the main part of our time. It is there that we must be able, and must strive, to be serviceable. To a young man seriously considering entrance into the ministry as a lifework a father once said, "But why not become a lawyer? A lawyer is important and influential in many ways. You can then give your spare time to religion and do a lot of good that way." This well-meant advice is too much in accord with common opinion. As if our vocation is of little moral significance, as if it might be counted out of the business of living. In fact, it is the very body of it, and if we are to embody the principles of Jesus anywhere we should do so in our vocation. This sounds innocent enough, but let it be thought through, and we shall see that to bring God's kingdom on earth by bringing it into our callings, our business and all, is one of the biggest of all tasks. We may not enlarge on this, but it is exceedingly important for the cause we are in. In our daily work we must realize ourselves and in that work we must be rendering true service.

#### RELYING ON GOD'S HELP

One other principle of Jesus concerns those of us who wish to follow His way in our time. It is that embodied in His unfaltering reliance on God's help. Reared as He was in the devout faith of the religious Jews of His time, Jesus seems never to have doubted the reality, and the personality and power of God. In Him the faith of His fathers was sustained by His own experiences. Both by teaching and experience God was most real to Him. He turned to the Father as readily as flowers turn to the sun. He was engaged in the Father's business, and God would see Him through. Like His forebears, He looked on God as a fatherly providence that simply would not fail. God's will for men was beneficent, but it was also firm. God was not only Father but He was also Judge, and men's lives and destiny were in His power. Jesus' whole life was in God's presence and He communed with Him familiarly, as friend with friend.

Jesus seems to have shared, though not in an extreme way, the apocalyptic hopes of many in His time. History had proved that God's kingdom would not come on earth by ordinary means. The Jews could not inaugurate it by revolt against Rome; nor by leavening all the world. It required

strenuous measures undertaken by God. Jesus would prepare as many as He could for its coming, and He would take the steps God showed Him for its beginning. But God must bring it in. If Jesus' earthly mission must end in death, then there must be a second coming in power and glory. In His earthly days and for this glorious future, Jesus relied implicitly on God's purpose and His power.

In our time there are serious obstacles to hearty belief in God as Jesus understood Him. Some of the difficulties are natural, and some rational and moral. The realistic temper of today makes belief in a functioning God more difficult. Some are even saying that we must learn to live without God. And it is sensible to admit the obstacles as they are. But to discount God was not the way of Jesus. Indeed, God was the major premise in all His thinking. So, too, it is difficult today to believe in the picturesque apocalypticism of those days.

The crux of the matter is whether we in our time can believe in a God who is real and effectual, and in what ways we may expect Him to help in the bringing of things to pass. This may be the hardest part of all. But if Jesus' way is to be lived in our time we shall need to come to effective terms with this central reality. In the past the life of nations and peoples seems to have gone forward through alternating epochs and crises, of varying nature and length. Perhaps it is through such alternations that God will continue to work. But here is a basic principle of Jesus; and we must deal seriously with it, and draw from it all that we can for the business of living.

The sum of the whole matter is this. Jesus is to be taken seriously by those who profess His name. He has something to meet the world's need if it can be given effect. Just to acknowledge discipleship to Him is not enough. To imitate Him personally is not sufficient. We are to bring His great principles into our day and world, and apply them. The most essential of those principles we have discussed. At present the most rugged Christians can apply His principles only partially. This is due in part to human weakness and in part to the economic and international system in which we live. We must clarify our aims and reinforce our moral and religious purposes. We must exert every effort to learn what steps and changes are necessary to make the Christian way livable in our time. And then, with relentless earnestness and thorough, co-operative and persistent work, we must devote ourselves to bringing those several things to pass. Only so will His kingdom come and His will be done among men.

# The Christian Evangel and Social Culture

H. RICHARD NIEBUHR

## I

THE problem of the relation of Christian evangelism to social culture arose at the very beginning of Christian history and the solution indicated in the pages of the New Testament remains the standard answer to the question, not because of the authority of the Scriptures but because of the nature of the gospel itself which requires that answer.

Klausner has pointed out with a sharpness which Christian writers on the subject frequently fail to employ, that the difference between Jesus and Judaism lay at the point of His indifference to Jewish culture. Judaism, says Klausner, is more than a religion and an ethics. It is a total national life brought under the influence of faith; it is ceremony, ritual, organization, law, hygienic rules—culture, in short. Jesus, good Jew that He was in His ethics, was wholly indifferent to these things while He proclaimed the radical ethics only. We may take exception to the definition of Jesus' gospel as merely radical ethics, but we can recognize the truth in the assertion that Jesus was quite unconcerned about the defense of Jewish culture, its Sabbath, its laws, its religious class-structure. Speaking in the midst of this culture Jesus was concerned with the announcement of the good news of the coming Kingdom. It is not fair to say that His message was addressed to individuals rather than to the Jewish nation, as though individuals might enter into the coming Kingdom one by one while the nation was denied that privilege. The attitude seems rather to be one which was as applicable to the whole nation as to its individual members. It required the turning away from defense of the gains made in the past and conserved in habits or institutions, and a turning toward the revolutionary kingdom of God, with complete trust that whatever there might be of value in the old culture would be preserved in the Kingdom. The law, the basis of Jewish culture, did not need to be defended; it would be fulfilled. This attitude toward culture cannot be called hostile; it is indifferent, but the indifference is that of one who is interested in far greater values and who has turned from defense of the individual or social values to trust in God.



The relation of Paul's gospel to culture is equally instructive; moreover, it contains an element which is not readily discernible in Jesus since the apostle dealt with two cultures, the Jewish and the Hellenistic. Paul's attitude toward Jewish culture may be less marked than Jesus' by indifference, a little more by both affection and hostility; yet essentially it was like the Master's. Jewish culture, or its basic element, the law, is regarded as a good to be transcended rather than defended; moreover, for the sake of proclaiming the gospel to the Gentiles Paul cuts it loose from its association with Jewish and adapts it to Hellenic culture. The Greek language, Greek thought-forms, Greek habits of life, Greek ethics (the natural knowledge of God's will) are used to make the good news of salvation intelligible to the citizens of another world. Yet there is no identification of the gospel with Hellenism for it challenges the wisdom of the Greeks, judges their domestic institutions and excoriates their pride in their attainments. There is in Paul, moreover, a relative appreciation of culture as serving a relative purpose in the interim between the beginning and the end of the gospel revolution. (Attitude toward the Roman empire and the law.) But this element in the discipline is not properly a part of the gospel itself; it has little connection with the good news which is to be proclaimed.

Two further points common to Jesus and Paul, may be mentioned: their gospel was addressed primarily to proletarians, that is, to those who had no great interest in the preservation of culture because they were not allowed to share in its goods, while they were subject to its restrictions. Secondly, the appeal in both cases was not from culture to nature but from culture and nature to superculture or supernature. Culture was not regarded as convention which obscures the natural goodness and limits the natural freedom of man. The promise of the gospel was for a state of life which transcended while it fulfilled both nature and culture. In his parables of the kingdom of God Jesus used terms derived from both spheres without distinction. Paul described the new life as a new nature but he also described it as a new citizenship.

On the basis of this historically simplified approach we may distinguish three main problems which our subject raises: the problem of the relation of the content of evangelism to culture; the problem of the method of evangelism in human culture; and the problem of the cultural conservation of the results of evangelism. We shall not discuss in this paper the subsidiary problems indicated in the previous paragraph.

## II

The good news which the Church of Christ must proclaim today has as little to do with the conservation or the victory of any existing human culture as it had in the days of Jesus or of Paul. It is the good news about a new life which cannot be defined in terms of a preceding state of existence. It is not a potentiality visible in the natural or in cultural life from an immanent point of view. The gospel is the news that by the action of God a life has been made possible though not yet wholly actual, which is free, harmonious, blessed, eternal, self-sacrificing and yet self-finding, loving and beloved—life in the glory of God. Contrasted with this life culture and nature are both of a wholly different order. Though from the point of view of faith in the supercultural the promise of the eternal may be seen in the temporal, of the holy in the sinful, yet the relation of the former to the latter is one of emergence or of revolutionary change. Hence the gospel of the kingdom of God is turned away from culture, dealing with its values as it does with those of the natural life; that is to say, they belong to the many things which may be added to seekers after the kingdom of God but are not to be objects of anxiety. In case of need man can and must get along without them; but he cannot dispense with the one pearl of great price.

From the point of view of the gospel, culture needs to be faced not only with indifference but with a measure of hostility, for it so easily becomes a good that is the enemy of the best. It is wealth to which man attaches himself, seeking to serve two masters. "How hardly shall they that have culture enter into the kingdom of God!" It is superficial health which obscures disease so that its possessors do not know themselves to be sick and in need of a physician. It is the law which leads men to regard themselves as chosen children of God, subject neither to judgment nor salvation. It is the work of men's hands before which they fall down in worship. Because it is not evil in itself the gospel cannot be wholly hostile to it; anticultural asceticism is always somewhat foreign to the Christian faith but perhaps not quite so foreign as the worldliness which exalts culture. Christian evangelism, therefore, must seek to turn men away from trust in civilization by pointing out its finite and temporal character, the dependence of the good in it on the evil, its total and complete unfitness to be an object of devotion.

Evangelism faces its greatest difficulty when it deals with a culture that has been modified or even formed by past devotion to the kingdom of God;

for now it faces institutions and habits which seem to be expressions of the new life, just as Jewish culture seemed to make concrete the spirit of prophetic faith. So-called "Kultur-Protestantismus" and Roman Catholicism tend to identify the gospel with the proclamation of the goodness of such cultural institutions, and evangelism with their propagation. Democracy or hierarchy, humanitarian or monastic ideals, empirical or scholastic science, Protestant or Roman religious institutions—at worst the English and German or Latin languages, common law or Roman law, Akron-plan or Gothic architecture become a part of the gospel to be proclaimed to the heathen. Then not only the content but also the direction of evangelism is changed. It turns to the defense of a particular culture and loses its promise, its force and its appeal. The necessity of distinguishing between gospel and culture is particularly important under such circumstances.

### III

It is evident, however, that although the gospel is supercultural neither evangelist nor evangelized can separate themselves from their culture. Like Jesus and Peter, like Paul and Apollos, they are conditioned through and through by the culture in which they have been nurtured. Their concepts have been fashioned by it along with their language. So long as evangelist and evangelized belong to the same culture communication is possible, though beset by hazards. It becomes exceedingly difficult when they belong to different cultures; yet in this situation there is also the best opportunity for understanding and making evident the distinction between gospel and culture. New periods of evangelism seem to have begun frequently under such circumstances—Jesus preaching to publicans and sinners, Paul to Greeks, Augustine to Anglo-Saxons, Wesley the Oxonian to miners. The problem is solved in part by the use of the most common or "natural" ideas and institutions, as vehicles for the conveying of the gospel. Hence the effectiveness of Jesus' simple parables. It must be solved to a larger extent by the evangelist's recognition of the limitations and relativity of his culture and of the ability of the language, concepts, mores of the evangelized to become containers of the meaning of the gospel. This is always the problem of preaching, but the theologian who follows the preacher in seeking to communicate the meaning of the gospel is no less under obligation to become a Jew to Jews, a Greek to Greeks and, today, a Hindu to Hindus, a Chinese to Chinese and a Marxian to Marxians. As a theologian he will need to be a philosopher—an Aristo-

telian in medieval Europe, a neo-Kantian in Germany, an empiricist in America—and as a gospel theologian he will need to repent of his philosophy, knowing that it is a vessel only and not the only possible vessel. His philosophy is a tool by means of which he seeks to say what his philosophy cannot contain and the philosophy of the new nation or class is an instrument which must be used to express what does not lie in its province to express. What Augustine did with Platonism and Thomas with Aristotelianism the evangelistic theologian will need to do over and over again with the philosophies of the modern West and East. Thus culture will not be used as a substitute for the gospel but as a means for its proclamation.

#### IV

The third problem does not really belong to the sphere of evangelism, yet the evangelist necessarily becomes a church-father with children who require discipline and the forms of family life. Every conversion, every new direction of life, every new insight must express itself in habits or social institutions, in resolutions or laws, in words and concepts—in culture. Without such actualization the direction is not maintained, the insight remains a hazy, perhaps emotional, thing. Evangelization must always result in a sort of "Christian" culture; the gospel must become "law." To be sure, this concretion will never result from evangelism alone; other forces besides the gospel will shape the new habits and institutions; and since the gospel always remains largely promise such Christian culture is infinitely far from the Kingdom. Therefore evangelism, while not indifferent to the relative cultural expression of conversion, will turn to the work of conservation with a certain unwillingness. Paul's ambiguous attitude toward the law and Calvin's three-fold application of it will remain inevitable in a Christianity which proclaims a supercultural gospel, yet knows that men are living in an interim in which they may slip back into barbarism as well as advance beyond culture. Whether legalism is a greater danger than antinomianism, Christian worldliness than Christian barbarism, is a question which can be endlessly disputed. The danger seems to lie now in "Kultur-Protestantism," in the idolatry of culture, whether capitalistic, communistic, or nationalistic. The best way to conserve Christian culture is to forget about it and to let it be built from within in consequence of aspiration after a salvation that lies far beyond it. And the cure for these much-feared but scarcely ever formidable monsters, antinomianism and barbarism, does not lie in more law and culture but in more gospel.

# The Dilemma of the Socially-Minded

WILLIAM K. ANDERSON

**D**R. W. A. VISSER 't HOOFT has remarked that the distinguishing characteristic of the American churches is their emphasis upon the social aspects of the faith. This may have grown out of the problem of slavery to which the churches applied themselves, while Christian congregations in many other parts of the world were still content to save the souls of the downtrodden without thought of responsibility for their temporal condition. Testimony to the seriousness with which some of the churches viewed the slavery issue is still furnished by the divided condition, North and South, of several communions. Only now are these wounds in process of being healed.

Having successfully espoused the cause of the slave, it was rather natural that the sense of responsibility should be extended, though the process was slow. Just how slow it was may be realized when one considers the fact that the next social problem to receive widespread notice was that of alcoholic beverages, and that as late as 1888 John G. Woolley, an exponent of prohibition, was denied the privilege of being heard in the official conclave of North America's most militantly dry denomination, a Methodist General Conference. The Church, however, of course, is part and parcel of national life. The general populace in the post-war decades largely forgot moral considerations and specialized on uncritical wealth-getting. So it is not strange that this period fails, in retrospect, to reveal very much influential moral fervor in the churches.

Gradually, however, the challenge of the liquor traffic aroused the Christian churches. The first decade of this century witnessed the development of "muscular Christianity," in the rise of which conscience became militant and aggressiveness overcame caution. Ministers studied liquor statistics with more ardor than they did their Bibles, as the growing Anti-Saloon League replaced the politically unpopular Prohibition Party, and local option, followed by county and state prohibition, began to chip away at the edges of wet America. Organized vice also soon felt the sting of the ecclesiastical attack. Then, under an expanding program of social action, the economic processes themselves came under critical review by the Church, as Walter Rauschenbusch published in 1907 his *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, and



Harry Ward in 1908 organized his Methodist Federation for Social Service. The cause rapidly advanced. Frank Mason North and other kindred minds were instrumental in having a Social Creed approved by the Methodist General Conference of 1908, and later in the same year by the newly organized Federal Council of Churches. This creed gave the dignity of official ecclesiastical backing to the movement for industrial justice, including such items as higher wages, shorter hours, collective bargaining, compensation insurance, old-age insurance, safety-first and the like.

The movement toward a social interpretation of the gospel, in which Rauschenbusch, Gladden, Parkhurst, Strong, McConnell, Ward, Matthews, Eddy, Page, Niebuhr, are some of the milestones, received no small reinforcement when congregations began to sing the social gospel in such hymns as Doctor North's "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life," Elliott's "When Wilt Thou Save the People," Merrill's "We Knelt Before Kings," and more recently, Holmes' "The Voice of God Is Calling," Harlow's "O Young and Fearless Prophet," Fosdick's "God of Grace and God of Glory," Oxenham's "In Christ There Is No East or West," Symonds' "These Things Shall Be," and the like.

The World War called the attention of the Church to still another institution of mankind which it has come to recognize as the mother of all sins. The call to peace was at first faint. Those who espoused it during the war years were just queer. The brave soul who in 1917 wore a card on his back through Union Square, New York, bearing the words, "Thou shalt not kill," was arrested, and rebuked by the judge on the grounds that there were appropriate times and places to quote even parts of the Ten Commandments. Here and there, a prematurely educated pacifist appeared outside the Quaker and Brethren Churches, but they were scarce. As a rule, "preachers presented arms" along with the rest of the nation. The Christian conscience on war lagged far behind that on industrial conditions. In fact, though it seems almost incredible, one searches in vain for any official pronouncement on war and peace in Methodist circles until 1924. Yet the years since then have registered such a very rapid education of Christians, both clerical and lay, regarding this enemy of civilization, that the extreme pacifist position is strongly represented now in practically every communion. The official attitude of the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches is now so completely anti-war that both have asked for the conscientious objectors of their own memberships the same kind of exemption from war duty or military training which



has commonly been accorded the Quakers and members of other pacifist bodies.

So the social gospel has been winning its way conspicuously for the past quarter century. The gains have not been made without resistance by the conservatives, or cost to the espousers of the newer interpretation. Many a pacifist warhorse bears the scars of battle, and few of those who have been influenced by the pioneers have not had to pay the price at one time or another. But the social gospel, which in its earlier years found theological support in the more progressive seminaries, in the popular thought of Ritschl, captured the minds of the younger generation of ministers in large numbers. The kingdom of God is a constantly recurring sermon theme. As a rule, the ablest graduates of the seminaries have been decidedly under the spell of the social emphasis, and the result has been that while pulpit relations committees may have differed with the social interpretations of their candidates, they have often been practically compelled to accept a minister with the advanced outlook because the more conservative brethren were unacceptable otherwise.

Within the past three or four years the situation has changed. The social gospel is no longer riding the crest of the wave; it is not now being listened to nonchalantly by laymen. No one needs to be told that we are in a serious backwash of reaction in favor of the old-time religion and against the interpretation of Christianity in international and, particularly, in economic terms.

Such a rapid reversal of opinion does not come without adequate cause. In attempting to detect the underlying influences producing it, it may first be recognized that the reaction has been largely a product of the past five years. During this period, there has been an advance in social legislation, joyfully acclaimed among the masses, not so cordially welcomed by the propertied classes. Relief for the unemployed has sometimes put a premium upon indolence, and has stirred up the spleen of taxpayers, most of whom have to work for their living. Unemployment and old-age pensions have served to increase taxes, and have therefore felt the sting of criticism. Collective bargaining, having been established as part of the nation's legal code, has become a substitute American plan, as it were, and is naturally meeting with stout resistance among certain industries which have a traditional policy of not dealing with organized labor. Translated into ecclesiastical terms, this means that prior to 1932 the preacher was speaking of what ought to be done, with the chances of its realization being very remote; now, with the advance of the

masses actually taking place, with their suffrage keeping in office an administration which was definitely out so far as the telephone subscribing strata of society were concerned (shades of *Literary Digest* poll!), middle-class resistance is aroused to the fighting point, and hostility is being directed against many items of social justice for which the Church has stood for a quarter century.

The situation has been aggravated by the rather impossible tax situation for the small business man. Communism, which America does not want, has been pushed out at the jittery public like a Hallowe'en spook by a group of bad boy confidential informants, so that many good churchmen suspect their conscientious pastors of enjoying a Soviet subsidy because the latter favor old-age pensions or oppose military training in the universities. Of course the ministry does not want Communism any more than does the laity, which makes the negative unanimous. But many ministers come under suspicion because of their belief that Communism is to be fought best by removing the conditions which foster it rather than by suppression or fright. Politics also enters the picture as a definite cause. The failure of the present administration to accomplish all it set out to do, or even a major fraction of what it promised, leaves it open to the attack of the disgruntled. The near-collapse of the mid-depression years is largely forgotten or generously discounted, and political division swells the chorus of objection. In other words, the social gospel is in the amazing and tragic predicament of being identified with the New Deal, by haters of the New Deal. This, in so far as it is true, is tragic at once for the social gospel, which should never be married to any political organization, and to the Republican Party, which cannot afford to allow itself to be jockeyed into standing against social justice.

This ubiquitous opposition finds anecdotal expression in more than the W.P.A. field, and echoes, of course, in the Protestant Church, which is an upper-middle-class institution. The bourgeois church member who expresses certain opinions in the office on Monday, at his lunch table on Tuesday, at a bridge party on Wednesday, on the suburban train on Thursday, to the barber on Friday, or at the game on Saturday, is not likely to change these opinions at church on Sunday, even though the gospel does say "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." So the Church is in the anomalous position of having preached the desirability of many things which are coming to actuality, and of now being in danger of mourning their arrival instead of welcoming them with a paean of victory. The Church which, under the leadership of the

sympathetic spirit of its Master, had espoused the cause of the lower classes, now bids fair, under the determined opposition of the aggrieved upper and middle classes, to bewail social reform and long for the good old days when *laissez faire* produced a romantic prosperity.

This does not seem to be a slight, passing opposition; it is determined and militant, selective in its outlook upon facts, and insistent upon whipping liberal opinion into line. This particular class of opinion has a predominance in many churches which is hard to withstand, for despite the fact that social creeds have been on the books for long years, they have never gotten into the thinking of any large numbers of its influential members; and, despite the fact that the Church has officially been sponsoring the cause of those who were unable to fend for themselves, this latter class, for one reason or another, has been content to accept whatever aid the Church has been willing to give, while still remaining outside its organization. By and large, labor organization leaders have not found their way into the councils of the Church, nor into its membership, and now, in a period of reaction, more liberal sentiment is left to the tender mercies of the aroused opposition, and the social gospel finds within the walls little articulate support among those classes which are supposed to be helped by it.

As a result, liberal heads are falling now and then, if they fail to note which way the wind is blowing, and liberalism is becoming cautious as it examines the entries to storm cellars. Bishop McConnell has called attention to the present difficulty of maintaining freedom of speech, and university professors give rather numerous testimonies to a similar suppressive tendency in academic circles.

This being our present situation, the insistent question to the conscientious minister is, "What to do?" It is easy for those who follow the style in thinking as they might in hats or automobiles. They need only forget the bothersome elements of the faith and feed the people what they like. Convictions are frequently embarrassing possessions. They were for the Christians of the pre-Constantine centuries; they are today, in a decidedly minor sense, for the preacher who would keep before his parishioners the social implications of his gospel. And there are many who count themselves men, and have no ambition to emulate the Vicar of Bray, who cannot pigeonhole this aspect of the Christian religion until more favorable conditions permit their being brought out again with impunity.

What shall the intelligent minister do who feels that his religion is

inextricably bound up with the social outlook, who feels that the world is in danger of perishing unless Christianity can be put to work in the affairs of the nations?

Before going any further, we ought to decide whether or not the social gospel stands for a reality, in the light of the actual situation existing in a service of worship. Let us bring the picture before us. Here are church-goers gathered together for the worship of God, an ordained minister leading them and utilizing part of the time to preach. When the minister deals with personal problems, common sense acknowledges that a real situation is being met. Even those who minimize the didactic potentialities of the auditory nerve can hardly deny the possibility of coming to grips with reality in matters of personal thought and conduct under these circumstances. Is there also the atmosphere of reality when the theme deals with what ought to be done in the industrial or international world?

The social gospel, as contrasted with the individual gospel, means, I suppose, that it is possible, not only to lift individual life through the direct and personal influence of Christ, but that it is also possible to raise the status of masses of men, women and children indirectly by improving their environment. This, at least, would seem to be a reality. When Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteenth Amendment extended such freedom to all Negroes in the United States, while the major part of race improvement still had to be worked out, the freedom itself was certainly a magnificent example of social service. It gave to the Negro the dignity of a human being and opened the door to the remarkable advancements which the intervening decades have recorded. The Prohibition movement was certainly an attempt at the social gospel. It aimed to substitute for the conversion of the individual drunkard the removal of temptation from coming generations of young people, thus to improve the individual by improving the environment in which he lived. The fact that the attempt failed in its first nation-wide experiment does not invalidate the reality of its aspiration or of its partial and temporary achievement. Slum clearance would further illustrate the reality of what the social gospel is aiming at. It is well recognized that juvenile delinquency, ill-health and general sordidness of life are nourished in such places, and that city slums are consequently a social menace. From Mulberry Bend to the twelve square area of Queensboro, the elimination of such crime breeders furnishes additional example of lifting individual life by means of a social remedy. The social remedy is

not sufficient in itself, but it is at least one powerful lift in the right direction.

When the Christian minister is interested in wages and the problems centering around employment, it is because he believes poverty itself is a degrading influence upon human life. He believes that the wider distribution of wealth, by lifting a burden of worry from the shoulders of the masses, and allowing for an increased dignity for the family by the improvement of food, clothing, housing, and educational advantages, will influence human life for good through the improvement of the environment. When he fights for peace, he believes that the removal of the curse of war upon a nation's populace will bring untold blessings to practically every inhabitant of the land. So he gives his support to the problem of having this gospel of Christ socially applied, in order that it may bring its full benefits to a suffering world.

All this would seem to be real. The further question presents itself as to whether the preaching of such ideals to a church congregation can in any way accomplish the end in view. And the answer is that it ought to. We say that the soul of all improvement is the improvement of the soul. But there are different manners of improving the souls of men, and if bettering their environment is one indirect method of accomplishment, it ought to be possible to utilize the spiritually enlightened to raise the general conditions of human life so that more blessings of the Christian religion may be extended to the masses. While it is true that individual convictions with reference to such courses of action after being assented to in church often perish in the rough and tumble of life, it is also true that the course of any generation depends to some degree on the opinions of the citizens who constitute it; and the presentation of these social ideals to congregations of people influential in the life of the day, when shared in by them, can produce results toward Christianizing the course of future developments.

If then what is commonly known as the social gospel does represent a reality, and if it is important that these ideals shall become incorporated in the life of tomorrow, we may go on to ask what is the best homiletical way of making them effective in the thinking of church people, recognizing the existence of no inconsiderable hostility toward them.

First, there must be polite but unyielding insistence upon the right of the social interpretation to a place in Christian propaganda. This, of course, can be amply authenticated from the messages of the Old Testament prophets, from the obvious implications of the attitudes and teachings of Jesus, and



from the aspirations of men of thought such as Augustine, and of men of action such as Wesley. There has been a steady stream of influence toward social betterment through the generations of churchmen, beginning at the start. Let not any references to the social enthusiasm of America's churches, found in the first sentence of this paper, blind anyone to the fact that Christianity was promoting Utopian ideals long before America was discovered. The social gospel may have received its given name in a twentieth-century christening, but it was no infant when it was baptized. Those who would expel it should recognize that they are dealing neither with a stepchild nor an adopted son of the Christian religion, but with a legitimate, though perhaps uncompanionable, member of the family.

In this connection, the significance of the statement on economics from the Oxford Conference of 1937 can hardly be exaggerated. It gives needed support to the wavering cause of social Christianity in the immediate present, analyzes the problems of our present age with keen insight and asserts both the right and obligation of the Church to seek to apply its gospel of brotherhood to the complex and perplexing economic problems of the age, not alone for the amelioration of the lot of the downtrodden, but also for the remaking of the commercial and industrial fabric of the generation along more Christian lines. This up-to-date Magna Charta of the social gospel comes at a crucial time. Its circulation among the fainthearted who are serving as targets for reactionary potshooting will help to make them worthy of the fathers. No good cause can be served by admitting that the social interpretation of the gospel is a dispensable option. Ground lost now will take decades to regain. The validity of Christianity's social ideals must be reasserted, cost what it may.

Second, the wise prophet of social righteousness will possess an attitude of tolerance that will save him from exemplifying in himself the thing he bewails in others. Generally, the more a man believes any creed the less willing he is to have the opposite paraded without protest. That is one reason for the prevalence of religious bigotry of all kinds. It also accounts for the fact that Greek sometimes meets Greek when the social gospel climbs into the pulpit of a fashionable church. The preacher who insists on the freedom of the pulpit often quotes the chivalrous (though unlocated, some claim) *bon mot* of Voltaire, "I do not agree with a word that you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it." When he uses this in his own behalf, he must be willing to grant to the pew more than the right to listen.



"What?" answers Mr. Valiant for the Truth, incredulously, "let 'em spout falsehood and get away with it?" Yes! For the price of freedom of speech in the pulpit is a similar freedom of speech in the pew. Otherwise the pulpit becomes Coward's Castle or Bigot's Bulwark.

After all, there are some things to be happy about in the present set-up in America. There is at present a wider distribution of wealth than exists in most other countries (to put it conservatively); and we do enjoy a high enough degree of freedom to express our frank opinion about either the administration or the system, provided we are willing to pay the price. (For nonpoliticians the system is likely to exact the higher toll.) But the price in any event is likely to be a bit less if we are also willing gracefully to grant the contrary-minded a similar privilege. It is good strategy, to say nothing of other considerations, for minorities to believe in freedom, and to act upon that credo.

Further, a discreet approach to the social gospel demands that the minister give it no more than its proportional share of emphasis. The Christian gospel is all one. There is not one gospel that is individual and another that is social. The perfect gospel is individually received and socially expressed. But many an impatient preacher of social ideals neglects the reception end of it. As a consequence, he alienates his constituency, which knows the individual aspect of the gospel by trying to lead them into a field which they think is foreign to their religion. He fails through not going at it under an approved pedagogical method. In both prayer and social reform it is true that we are not heard for our much speaking. Many of the radical school keep dinning social reform into the ears of Christians *ad nauseum*, and then wonder why they meet with stolid unresponsiveness. The gospel is more than social reform, and the person who goes into the ministry with the sole purpose of utilizing the Church to produce a revolution is going to be disappointed. I think of a young man who wrote in distress of soul for one of the religious periodicals some months ago. His sincere aspiration for a new social order had fallen on deaf ears and he was shaking the dust of the ministry off of his weary and insulted feet. He pointed out that all of the social reformers of the Church were in some kind of detached service, and expressed his opinion that the pastorate was hopeless for a socially enlightened man. Any man who has such an exclusive point of view would better be somewhere else than the pastorate. After all, church members have a right to expect of their minister something more than social agitation. They need comfort, they need encour-

agement, they need guidance and inspiration, they need instruction in the technique of meeting disappointment and of otherwise finding their individual ways through the tangle of present-day life with some measure of success. And the man who tries to preach without knowing anything else than prohibition, or the wider distribution of wealth, or the problems of peace, is bound to end up in cynical disappointment and self-pitying martyrdom.

The gospel must be received. God has something to give to His individual child, and if the minister knows nothing of this, but only knows what ought to be required of a sensitive Christian conscience, his people will fail to understand and appreciate him. If, on the other hand, he talks their language in the matter of the individual gospel, there is some chance of their being willing to admit that perhaps he has something in his social pronouncements.

A new realism is evident among the socially-minded in this regard. Many, after trying unsuccessfully to lead an unsympathetic and dwindling army for the establishment of a redeemed world, without being certain that the proposed redeemers were themselves of the elect, have come to a new recognition of the badness of human nature, somewhat akin to the discountenanced total depravity of many decades ago. This needed reaction, which it is hoped will be prevented from going too far beyond a corrective stage, serves to give new significance to the individual gospel, and helps the modern preacher to a proper perspective in interpreting the various phases of his gospel. So the desired social advance is seen to be definitely dependent upon minds which have been enlightened and souls which have been purged of their selfishness by the touch of the Master of Life. If the individual gospel is neglected, the social gospel fails through lack of impetus.

Another aspect of this same matter is that in Christian preaching, all social aspiration needs to be firmly rooted in definitely Christian soil. It is one thing to say that these social ideals are obviously right as a mere matter of justice. But to the Christian layman, the far more compelling approach is to base an unselfish appeal upon the spirit of Christ.

I think of a hard-boiled churchman, who, because of his well-known wealth, was the constant target of charitable institutions. He had developed a crust of surliness through which few could penetrate, and his reputation for expertness at rebuffing appeals equaled that of his affluence. At one time, the people of a neighboring community were staging a hospital drive, and someone thought of him. Two rather notoriously unregenerate doctors

were chosen to make the approach. They went at it to get results and decided to attack him in his most vulnerable point. Neither knew much of the Bible, but they hunted through the New Testament for quotations dealing with the care of little children, and the sick, and went in to the interview well armed with this material, which they utilized so well that they amazed the community by announcing a gift of \$25,000 from one whom everyone thought of as an unfeeling miser. But here was a man with a Christian background, and when two rather hypocritical solicitors approached him on the basis of the teaching of Christ, he fell.

A book of modern fiction, Gulbrandsen's *Beyond Sing the Woods*, furnishes a similar striking example. The book apparently was written to portray the change in the character of Old Dag from the dour economic overlord of the community to a kind and helpful citizen, who was as untiring in his good works during the latter part of his life as he had been in his money-grubbing policies of his earlier years. And on the night when Dag worked out his new philosophy of life, with the immediate possibility before him of wreaking a long-delayed vengeance upon a rival who was now at his mercy, it was the memory of a vivid experience which Dag had had in meeting God in the storm that finally determined his course of action.

Many social reformers are impatient with such matters. Like the husband of Browning's *Last Duchess*, they "choose never to stoop." To them, the realization of their ideals is a plain case of justice, and ought to need no other basis of appeal. Furthermore, they have seen the comfortable classes so often complacently hiding from their obvious social duties behind a screen of spirituality that they are suspicious of all demand for religion that is not one hundred per cent ethical. A man who sincerely believes after that fashion is to be admired for not utilizing hypocritical methods in order to get over his ends. But a Christian minister supposedly holds to belief in both the reality of the individual's contact with God, and to the value of Christ as a teacher, an example and a living personality. The proper emphasis upon both of these will give the preacher a foundation for his social emphasis which will afford increased effectiveness to that phase of his message. It is offered not as a subterfuge, nor merely as a technique, but as a necessary element in a complete ministry. Many who do not rate as radicals, but who have the social approach as a natural integral part of their thought, are doing influential work in this field by preaching such a balanced gospel.

An effective means of dealing with this difficult problem today involves

one further important point: reliance upon methods of realization which are in harmony with Christian purposes. Dr. George Albert Coe in his book, *Motives of Men*, 1928, gives a ternary classification of man, namely, those who rely upon force, upon trickery and upon reason. As might be expected, the palms go to the last named class. But since the publication of that book, a rather powerful emphasis has been felt in Christian circles in favor of the use of force in the attainment of desired social ends, on the grounds that reason and persuasion and love are too slow and ineffective, and that consequently no chance of ultimate social redemption lies with them. It would be a rather dogmatic guess, but one that might find some support in reason, to think that the appearance of this baneful influence of communistic philosophy upon Christian thought has had no small part to play in arousing the forces of conservatism to militant opposition. However that may be, when the philosophy of force has carried Christian thought to such conclusions, it has actually carried it beyond the bounds of any right to be called Christian. It is an old axiom of wisdom that one cannot seek an end by means which are out of harmony with the end without eventually suffering self-defeat. Were it not for the fact that the appeal to force finds support with some conspicuous Christian spokesmen of the day, it could hardly be deemed worthy of mention. As it is, the circulation of that idea places upon all exponents of the social gospel the obligation of announcing the methods by which he hopes to carry out his desired goals. The way of reason is desperately slow; persuasion seems futile where a man's personal material welfare dictates a negative answer; love seems impotent in a world of force. Only by winning the will of an opposition is the force of the opposition destroyed—and persuasion is the only method by which this can be effected.

Christian faith today demands not only belief in God and in His program, but also belief in the effectiveness of His instrument of love, as revealed by Christ, eventually to win the desired end. The Christian pulpit must be willing to bet its life on that assumption.

The social gospel is not dead. It is springing to new life. The opposition will be good for it, as it compels a rethinking of the whole program, gives birth to renewed convictions and refines the methods of accomplishment.

## Religion in Account With Classical Literature

WILLIAM PHILIP LEMON

IT is now over twenty years since that distinguished classical scholar, Professor Francis W. Kelsey, arranged at the University of Michigan a symposium on The Value of the Classics that included a discussion of their relation to Theology. Since then our whole outlook in formal education has been dominated by the doctrine of specific training. Victor Hugo's poems, memorized by our own great William James; the maneuvers of Thorndike's mice; the experiments of Karl Lashley, and the practical interests of John Dewey have combined to give a more utilitarian cast to the school curriculum. Where the classics are not retained as an ornate element, they would seem to have had their day and to cease to be, and what the authors of *Middletown in Transition* call "instrumentalism" has exacted its toll from that which was once regarded as a background for life. Indeed, even the Old World has not escaped the lure of the immediate and the test of the pragmatic. I recall that the Bishop of Wakefield, a few years ago, was astonished and delighted to find a clergyman enthusiastic about Euripides. Perhaps his surprise was due to the fact that the minister hailed from the United States, where Greek and Latin cease from troubling, and the classics are at rest, but I rather suspect that his reaction was due to a more general slump in which his own country must be included.

The plain fact is that our former motivation for a classical education has lost its potency, and no arguments that are based on utility and expediency can galvanize the corpse to life again. Granting that we are returning to a belief in the transfer of training, at least in identical elements, we gain nothing by relating paradigms to paradise or conjugations to character. Neither will it suffice to claim that an introduction to the world of the classics will enable us to escape from the Present into the Past. We are so busy limiting the vote of contemporaries that we certainly do not want to extend the franchise to the ancients. Furthermore, the erstwhile dread of a speaker in the House of Commons (we rarely had such in our Legislatures) mispronouncing a Latin word—to which Herbert Spencer refers in his work on

Education—is an object of historical curiosity that belongs to the age that feared blasphemy.

Even Matthew Arnold's dichotomization of the world into the Hellenistic and the Hebraic, and into Sweetness and Light, Liberty and Law, Culture and Restraint suffers from over-simplification, leads into a false dilemma, and fails to move us. Paul says, the invisible things of God, even His eternal power and godhead, can be perceived by the things that are made; and this is emphasized by the "Spermatikos Logos" of the Stoics, and the "inner light" of the Friends. Then are we in debt both to the Greeks and to the Hebrews for an understanding of Religion. Our *raison d'être* must not be limited to the pedantic and the picayune. Shakespeare's curate, who fed on the dainties that are bred in books, who ate paper and drank ink, must give way to those who seek to augment human experience in our age by the recurrent and persistent elements of our common nature. With a knowledge of the classics we believe this is possible.

A hundred years ago John Foster, the essayist, wrote nine letters *On the Aversion of Men of Taste to Evangelical Religion*, and in them he depreciated the study of what was called "polite literature" on the ground that if one enjoyed the company of the Homeric heroes and other great creations, both a "want of congeniality for sacred writings" and a lack of fellowship with Jesus Christ would follow.

Far different and better is the attitude of the great Catholic mystic and philosopher, Baron Von Hügel. In his letter to his niece Gwen, dated September 17, 1919, he writes: "It is quite possible (it is certainly much the more common state of soul) that your now deep and living sense of religion is making non-religious subjects more or less insipid to you—that you are feeling it rather a bore to concentrate upon Homer and Pindar, after Tertullian and the *Confessions*. But if this is so, or if it comes on later on, I want you, my Gwen, *carefully to ignore, and vigorously to react against, this mentality*. If there is one danger for religion—if there is any one plausible, all-but-irresistible trend which, throughout its long rich history, has sapped its force, and prepared the most destructive counter-excesses, it is just that—that allowing the fascinations of Grace to deaden or to ignore the beauties and duties of Nature. What is Nature? I mean all that, in its degree, is beautiful, true, and good, in this many-leveled world of the one stupendously rich God. Why, Nature (in this sense) is the expression of the God of Nature; just as Grace is the expression of the God of Grace. And not only are both



from God, and to be loved and honored as His: but they have been created, they are administered and moved, by God, as *closely inter-related parts of one great whole*—of the full and vivid knowledge and service of Him and happiness of ourselves.”

Both of the foregoing, however, it seems to me, fail to emphasize the intrinsic worth of the Greek and Latin writings. In the first case the classical standards are rejected as too low, and in the latter, while Nature is regarded as also an expression of God, there is more emphasis on the complementary function of Nature and Grace, and these are kept distinct from each other. It would seem still more of an advance to break down the artificial barrier between Reason and Revelation, and between Discovery and Inspiration, as did Lessing in 1780, so that the revealed truths become truths of reason, and what is implicit in Greek and Latin thought is made explicit through Christian interpretation. Religion can never be divided into hemispheres; it must submit to universal scrutiny both for content and for scope.

To the student of theology, the knowledge of the classics can be a corrective both for the blinkers of professional piety and for spiritual vested interests. We constantly need the clarity of a dispassionate estimate, and the neutral and objective world which is the quest of science may be secured for the invisibles and the intangibles—the sphere of the teacher of religion—by the inclusion of a world that is not based on any infallible or authoritative claims. The indirect lighting system is valuable in the spiritual and in the physical, and no less a thinker than Paul appealed in Greece to “certain of your own poets.”

The seven extant plays of Aeschylus illustrate the themes common to the Hebrew and the Christian religion. They might be regarded as dramatic applications of Biblical texts:

*The Persians*: “He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree” Luke 1. 52.

*The Seven Against Thebes*: “Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children” Exodus 20. 5.

*The Suppliants*: “None of you shall contract a marriage to any that is near of kin” Leviticus 18. 6.

*Prometheus*: “Know that God hath wronged me” Job 19. 6.

*The Trilogy of the*

*House of Atreus*: “That he might be just and the justifier” Romans 3. 26.

Then we can easily discern the association of ideas in the plays of Sophocles and in the Old Testament. The dread of being unburied, upon which the whole plot of the *Antigone* is based, finds many parallel references in the religion of the Hebrews (cf. 1 Kings 21. 23, 2 Samuel 21. 10, and the cleansing of the land in Ezekiel 39. 12-17). The temporary wrath of Athena in *Ajax* reminds us of Isaiah 54. 7, and the revulsion against incest found in *Oedipus the King* is echoed in the Levitical code. The unit for punishment is the family rather than the individual both in Greek and Hebrew thought (cf. Achan in Joshua 7), and the heroic character of Hercules in *The Trachinian Maidens* reminds us of Samson's exploits. Again, the sentiment that makes a life without motherhood a reproach for women is reflected in the writings of Sophocles: *Antigone* (870ff. *Oedipus Rex* 1504. *Trac.* 911. *Electra* 166, 962. *Oedipus Col.* 752, 1184), and this is paralleled in the Biblical stories of Sarah (Genesis 16); Rachael (Genesis 30); the mother of Samson (Judges 13) and the mother of Samuel (1 Samuel 1).

The need of a *super*-natural world to transcend the visible and the temporal is not restricted to the teaching of the Old and New Testament. Indeed, there is a singular paucity of references to another world among the Hebrew Scriptures, and what Bishop Warburton called "an extreme secular-ity," but Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 32, and the story of the witch of Endor, together with the parable of Dives and Lazarus, the Apocalypse and 1 Peter 3. 18-20, are paralleled by the descriptions of the nether world in *Odyssey* XI, Aristophanes' *Frogs*; Plato's *Georgias*, pp. 523ff.; *Phaedo* LXII, and the myth of Er in the *Republic*; Virgil's *Aeneid*, Book VI; Lucian's *Dialogues of the Dead*; Seneca's *Oedipus*, 530ff., and many others. This is the fulcrum outside of the City of Man's Soul; the Platonic rehearsal of death and the philosopher's effort to view life *sub specie aeternitatis*, and again we discover much that is common in these descriptions.

In the propagation of the Christian religion through the medium of the Greek language there is of necessity an interpenetration of two streams of culture. While it is true that in the Greek of the New Testament, with such notable exceptions as the preface to Luke and the letter to the Hebrews, together with the Septuagint Greek version, we have the *lingua franca* of the new era dating from Alexander the Great, and that the *koine* differs from the classical language, yet the LXX version of Hebrew writings is older by a millennium than the earliest dated MS. of the Old Testament. The implications of this for Biblical exegesis are obvious.

Within the compass of this account, there is no space to deal with the influences of the Greek vocabulary upon the Wisdom literature and the Apocalyptic sections of the Old Testament; upon the concepts of the Anti-Christ in the inter-Testament period; upon the teachings of Paul, and upon the Johannine Writings. Even a cursory reading of the Church Fathers will show how frequent are the allusions to the classics. The quotations of Clement of Alexandria, for instance, occupy upward of fourteen pages in Fabricius's *Bibliotheca Graeca*, and he, together with Origen and Justin Martyr, regards the glimpses of truth by the poets and philosophers of Greece to be as a pedagogue to Christ. For the very structure of their writings, they are indebted to the dialogues of Plato and the discussions of Cicero.

A careful reading of Morgan's *The Importance of Tertullian In the Development of Christian Dogma* reveals the fact that the language of the African Father determined the thought-forms of the gospel in the West for at least thirteen hundred years. While his Latin is not that of Cicero—rather is it the language of the people found in Plautus and Terence—the effect was enormous. In like manner Aristotle exercised remote control over Thomas Aquinas eleven centuries later. In his reliance on the validity of sense data; on the “goalfulness” of nature; on the limitations of thought in contrast to mystic claims, and on nature as good in everything, the Beloved Doctor in his *Summa Theologica* renders Aristotelianism into Latin as the chief medium for the presentation of the Christian faith, and Neo-Thomism has done likewise during the later centuries.

The ultimate unity in the constitution of the human mind makes inevitable the recurrent nature of our problems. Nothing is more salutary for the inflated ego, strutting about the planet and talking about “the acids of modernity,” than to be exposed to the discussions of the ancients. We have changed our lingo but not our burdens, and there is probably just as much net fear in the world today as in the period when men dreaded the thunderbolt of Zeus or the wrath of Yahwe.

Our professorial minds are solicited for verdicts upon the question of immortality—although, almost in the same breath, we have postulated the non-transfer of training, which last must also apply to teachers no less than to pupils. Have we never read the twenty-eight reasons adduced by Lucretius in his *De Rerum Natura* (Book III) for not believing in another life? Would it not be worth-while to share the grief of Cicero as he retires to his Tusculum villa after the death of Tullia, his daughter, and to “listen in”

on the *Disputations* or on his *Dream of Scipio*? Certainly one cannot read the Choral Interlude in Seneca's *Trojan Women* which begins:

"Is it a truth—or fiction blinds  
our fearful minds—  
That, when to earth we bodies give,  
souls yet do live?"

without being duly impressed with the touch of nature that makes the whole world kin.

It would not be hard to show that many of the themes that are now the headlines of our souls are akin to those that confronted the writers of the Greek and Latin classics. The fictitious nature of the concepts of Government—the thesis of Professor Thurman W. Arnold in *The Symbols of Government*—was anticipated by Plato in the *Republic* when he makes the elder guardians play Providence for the vulgar, and Viscount Herbert Samuel's recent wrestle with freedom and determinism in his *Belief and Action* is as old as Lucian's satire *The Convicted Zeus*.

The Dialogues of Plato serve as an example confirmation of the cyclic nature of our thinking, and should prove valuable to the interpreter of religion. In *Euthyphro* the distinction is between the truth of authority and the authority of truth. Then the *Apology* is the Hellenistic parallel to the Passion of Jesus, because it proves that there is a community of the spiritually noble who are willing to surrender mere existence for the sake of deathless values. The *Crito* contains a Socratic transfiguration scene with "fertile Phthia" instead of an "exodus to be accomplished at Jerusalem," while *Hippias Minor* describes the questers who are always with us, ever learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth. *Ion* is concerned with the knowledge that passeth knowledge, and warns us that it is not wisdom to be only wise. *Sophrosyne* is the important word in *Charmides*, and it is worth comparing the word and its meaning with the two passages in the New Testament where it is found (Acts 26. 25, 1 Timothy 2. 9). Possibly the words of Jesus recorded in John, "I have called you friends," will have greater significance after we read the dialogue in *Lysis*.

The doctrine of pre-existence is still a dominant aspect of the living religions of the world today, and it is used as a thought category to explain Jesus both by Paul and the author of the Fourth Gospel. Hence, the need of a reading of *Meno*, where we have Plato's doctrine of Reminiscences. We have referred already to the explanation of philosophy as the

art of learning how to rehearse death. This teaching found in *Phaedo* is similar to Paul's mysticism in the identification of the believer with the death and resurrection of Jesus. Moreover, we must read *Cratylus* as an elaboration of the statement: "By your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned" (Matthew 12. 37), even as certain passages in *The Laws* against animal sacrifices deserve to be placed side by side with Isaiah 1. 10-15; Micah 6. 6-8; Hosea 6. 6 and Amos 5. 21-25. Finally, in the yearning for the city of God let down from heaven, the thoughts of the Apocalypse, that burst through language and escape, should be supplemented by the *Republic* of Plato.

With all our kaleidoscopic changes and our abject submission to what Aristophanes calls the Great God Whirl, there are fixed human relationships within the flux of life, and the student of religion who desires to aid in the adjustment of these requires such an enlargement of personal experience as great literature affords. Of course, the red blood of humans suffers from being reduced to ink, but by the aid of imagination, we can reconstruct the issues that are involved in the epics and essays and plays.

After all, the famous triangle, as Emerson reminds us, goes back to Helen of Troy, Menelaus and Paris. The Mother and Son *motif* in Synge's *Riders to the Sea* is duplicated in Hecuba and Hector, even as the Father and Son crisis of *Hamlet* is in the obligation laid upon Orestes to revenge the death of his father, Agamemnon. Compare the Brother and Sister relation in Euripides' *Electra* with the Russian play of Tchekhov called *The Cherry Orchard*, or the tension between two brothers in *Beyond the Horizon* of Eugene O'Neill with the *Seven Against Thebes* of Sophocles. We might go on to show that the adoption of such phrases as the Oedipus and the Electra complexes in Freudian psychology, and the use of the myth of Narcissus are proofs that while men change, man remains ever the same.

Perhaps Euripides, because of his mental tension between traditional and accepted explanations, and his own skepticism, can help us superbly by his dramatic characterizations, for in them are focused our recurrent personal conflicts. His *Hippolytus*, with the invisible and superhuman struggle between Venus and Diana, is an enacting of the issue between marriage and celibacy. The *Cyclops*, like the *Prometheus Vinculus* of Aeschylus, portrays the contrasts of brute strength and wisdom. Three plays, *Iphigenia in Aulis*, *Iphigenia in Tauris* and *Alcestris*, represent the influence of death upon life, and the extremities of love and hate are displayed in *Medea* and *Hecuba*.



Through all his plays, especially in *The Phoenician Women*, and the *Heraclidae*, we see the oscillations of life as it is affected by the laws of heredity and by creative freedom, and ecstasy and reason are found at death grips in the *Bacchae*. Indeed, in the work of Euripides we have the Past as Divinity departing and the Future as Divinity arriving.

When we pass from personal to institutional life, the teacher of religion is enriched by a knowledge of Greek and Roman life in Family, State and Temple, and through a discernment of the conditioning effect of the social heritage and conventions. It is possible that the poet of the *Iliad* had his tongue in his cheek, when in Book XIV he gives us a glimpse of the domestic life of Heaven, and Theocritus (Idyll VIII, 57-60) cites the evil example of Zeus and his amours, but, as a reflection of earthly standards, it is instructive. The great Epic, which begins with a wrong done by Agamemnon to a suppliant father, is made to end with a right done by Achilles to Priam, the mourning father of Hector. Then, also, we have vicarious suffering by Zeus in Book XVI, when he honors his dear son, Sarpedon, who is destined to die, by "bloody raindrops on the earth." While the marital fidelity of Penelope in the *Odyssey* is not supported unanimously by subsequent writers and commentators, the continual contrast that is made between the wife of Ulysses and Clytemnestra, wife of Agamemnon, is, at least, a recognition of chastity. The rift between the generations is amply illustrated in the dialogue of Admetus and his father in the *Alcestis* of Euripides, and between father and son in *The Clouds* of Aristophanes.

Aristotle declares that the State is prior to the individual, and there are ample indications of the restricting and subordinating influence of "the powers that be" upon the single life. The trilogy of plays by Aeschylus, known as *The House of Atreus*, depicts the crude and unchecked impulses of blood revenge as it is refined, regulated and eventually rationalized in the Areopagus tribunal. It is, as Professor Hocking says, a vivid account of the rationalization of punishment, and the third chorus of *Agamemnon* deserves to be read with the eighteenth chapter of Ezekiel as a noble declaration, in pre-Christian conceptions, of the justice of God. We can only mention the *Antigone* of Sophocles, and the war plays of Euripides such as *The Trojan Women*, *Hecuba* and *Andromache* as examples of the moral individual at odds with immoral society both in religious ideas, and in the values of human life.

The gamut of the human mind in its itinerary toward the Divine is



displayed in the various stages of the Greek religion. First, we see the *humanization* of the world in the anthropomorphic descriptions of the early Epics. Yet by making the gods so human, they were inevitably measured by the same standards of right and wrong that man applied to himself. This, at least, prepared the world for that daring and stupendous climax, in the model prayer given by Jesus, when man invites Heaven to confer forgiveness upon him on the same terms that he extended it to his fellow-humans. Then followed the *naturalization* of the world, as we have already observed in the great dramatists, and in Plato and Aristotle. Skepticism was another and a later stage reflected in such writers as Lucian, Pyrrho, and Sextus Empiricus, and we have a mood not unlike that which came in the wake of Victorian science. Finally, there is the full round of revolution in the *spiritualization* of the world on a higher level in Plotinus and the Neo-Platonists. Allowing for all the dangers of generalization, these cyclic phases are analogous to both the Hebrew and Christian religion, and call for reflection, unless we are to have a mutilated conception of the world as the dwelling place of God.

On the retina of the world's eye there remain two Suffering Servants who, while they are in marked contrast, may together constitute an enduring embodiment of truth. Oedipus, the subject of the plays of Sophocles, is one and the personality that wrung the heart of those who witnessed his pathetic plight, is the example of a supreme paradox. The hero, who could solve the riddle of the Sphinx, and deliver his country from its dreadful presence, becomes totally incapable of personal salvation, and discovers that he has been guilty of both patricide and incest. No greater portrayal of frustration and futility in earthly relationships is possible. Like the big Four in the classical Hades, Tantalus, Ixion, Tityus and Sisyphus, the punishment of Oedipus is a life made meaningless. His wife-mother a suicide; his father dead at his hand; his children made to suffer with him, the once discerning King is dethroned, blind, disgraced, and exiled from his dominion.

The other is likewise a Man of Sorrows, "who came unto his own and his own received him not." The end of the Man of Galilee, who died without the city walls, ignored by the people, spurned upon by the religious leaders; betrayed, denied and deserted by His inner circle of followers, is a very different after-image. He is described as transcending death. The resurrection and ascension of the Christ renders Him universal by giving spirituality to His rule as the Lord both of the dead and of the living. Henceforth, He

is depicted as timeless and spaceless, and the metaphor of a man at the right hand of God carries with it the significance of the human as the vehicle of the Divine Mind. Man is thus seen as enshrined at the heart of a cosmos under control, and the Divine and human are revealed as at one.

Here, then, we are constrained to leave the subject. The Delphic influence may not equal that of Sinai; it is certainly not comparable with Calvary, but Apollo from the "just-judging" sanctuary (Pindar Pyth. XI. 9) calls for inward purity rather than outward conformity, and the teacher of religion must follow one who would not bruise the broken reed, nor quench the smoking flax.

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## Wesley: Man of a Thousand Books and a Book

JAMES R. JOY

THROUGHOUT his long life, from his fifth birthday, when, according to the family custom, one of his sisters taught him all his letters, large and small, from A to Zed, to that other day more than eighty years afterward, when in his carriage on his way to his last preaching place, he read his last book, "a tract by a poor African," John Wesley was seldom without a book in his hand. In most of his many portraits he holds a book, as he does in the equestrian statue in Bristol. He eagerly sought and read most of the important works which appeared in his lifetime in England, Europe and America, as well as the classic writings of antiquity and the Christian Fathers. He once estimated roughly that he had read 600 volumes, and, as we know that he was author or editor of some 400 publications, his right to be called "a man of a thousand books" none will dispute. Yet One Book he exalted above all others. In the memorable introduction to his collected Sermons he wrote:

"To candid and reasonable men I am not afraid to lay open what have been the inmost thoughts of my heart. I have thought, I am a creature of a day, passing through life as an arrow through the air. I am a spirit come from God, and returning to God; just hovering over the great gulf; till a few moments hence I am no more seen; I drop into an unchangeable eternity! I want to know one thing—the way to heaven, how to land safe on that happy shore. God Himself has condescended to teach me the way, for this very end He came from heaven; He hath written it down in a book. O give me that Book! At any price, give me the Book of God. I have it; here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be *homo unius libri*!"

"Man of a thousand books and a Book"—what man in all history can show a clearer title to that distinction!

Wesley was cradled in books. His father, the Reverend Samuel Wesley, Oxford graduate and in his young manhood one of the coterie of wits and poets who sponsored the *Athenian Gazette*, wrote both prose and verse. The rectory bookshelves at Epworth were crammed at the expense of pantry and wardrobe, as his pinched and threadbare daughters had good reason to complain. Samuel, Junior, Oxonian, usher in Westminster School and head-

master of Blundell's School at Tiverton, also produced verse which was rated as respectable in an age when inspired poetry was rare. Susanna, the mistress of the manse, was a daughter of Doctor Annesley, the bookloving minister of a Dissenting London congregation. Even in her teens she read, and considered what she read. Her correspondence with her famous sons shows that she found time to read the books that they were reading at the university, and that she formed her own opinions and could express them with unusual clarity and vigor. One of her score of lovely sisters married John Dunton, eccentric London publisher, and another of the brood is believed by some to have been the first wife of Daniel Defoe, though it is hard to think of the author of *Robinson Crusoe* as John Wesley's uncle.

### I. OXFORD READING

Oxford was a tradition with the Wesleys, and, despite his perpetual debts, the rector of Epworth managed to put his three sons through Christ Church. When John won a college fellowship, his father wrote exultantly, "Nothing can matter now. My Jacky is fellow of Lincoln!"

When, as an undergraduate, young John, who had been the model collegian, a good swimmer, tennis player, performer on the flute, who could handle a fowling piece and kept a saddle horse at Oxford—when this popular youngster began to take more serious views of life, and to eschew light and nonimproving company, he associated more and more with books, especially those dealing with personal religion. Much of his correspondence with his mother concerned his reading. The books which helped to mould his thinking in those critical days were especially, *The Imitation of Christ*, by Thomas à Kempis; *Holy Living and Dying*, by Jeremy Taylor; William Law's *Serious Call* and *Christian Perfection*; and a small volume by Henry Scougal, a Scots divine, *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*, a work which he highly prized, and which also helped George Whitefield at a crisis in his development. It was at Oxford, also, that Wesley read Doctor Cheyne's *Book of Health and Long Life*, and adopted the rules by which he governed his physical condition. Another work which he read with avidity soon after his graduation was *The Primitive Church*, by Peter King, afterward Lord Chancellor. This writer convinced Wesley that bishops and presbyters were the same order, and therefore that he had the same authority as a bishop to ordain his preachers—a conclusion upon which he was to act forty years later, to the great scandal of the Anglicans.

One of Wesley's college resolutions was to waste no time; "Leisure and I have taken leave of one another," he wrote; and they never met again. He so overcame his besetting "intemperance of sleep" that he habitually rose at four and worked through an eighteen-hour day, year in and year out, for sixty years. By way of improving his time, he accustomed himself to read while walking—and he thought nothing of walking from Oxford to London! Later he read on horseback—and he often spent more hours in the saddle than in bed! When past sixty, a lady gave him a chaise and pair; he closed one door of the coach and built a bookcase against it, while in front (where a windshield would be) he fixed a hinged board on which he might rest his book and write his notes. His reading was by no means limited to religion. The titles of scores of the books he read have been preserved.<sup>1</sup> He was at home in Latin and Greek, and had an easy acquaintance with French, German, Spanish and Italian. History and biography he delighted in. Poetry did not greatly move him, though he read Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, Prior and the contemporary poets, such as they were, and edited a three-volume anthology of English verse. With Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* he had no patience. " 'Sentimental,' " he remarked. "What is that? He might as well say 'Continental.' " *The Spectator* he read, and borrowed from it three of Addison's lyrics for the *Collection of Psalms and Hymns*, which he compiled in Georgia (1737). His over-pious literary executor found among his effects a quarto Shakespeare, its margins crammed with notes in Wesley's neat hand. But, conceiving no possible value in even his master's comments on so heathenish a writer, he destroyed the treasure unread. Page Doctor Rosenbach and Gabriel Wells!

After reading a book, it was Wesley's habit to "collect" it. This was his word for his practice of writing out a summary and appraisal of the book. Those which he liked, he immediately turned to good account, quoting them in his sermons, commending them to others, and often producing condensed, simplified, handy editions at low prices, so as to make them available for the common people.

## II. AUTHOR AND EDITOR

We would enter no great claim for Wesley as an author of creative literature, although he was always writing, always compiling and editing for the press. A list of the publications which bear his name exceeds 400, of which

<sup>1</sup> See "John Wesley, the Bookman," by George Jackson, *Religion in Life*, Autumn, 1935.

more than one half are original. Although he dabbled in printer's ink almost from boyhood, and had tasted the delights and anxieties of authorship before 1738, the year of his "awakening," that year marks the beginning of his productive period. Bishop Welch finds that only fifteen of his books appeared before 1740. Then came the decade of the defense of Methodism, followed (1750-1760) by controversial and theological works. The political tracts date from 1768. Sermons, hymns, journals and pamphlets in the form of open letters appeared at frequent intervals all through this half century. He edited the *Arminian Magazine*, devoted to the defense of "universal redemption," and condensed the great theological writings of Christendom in a fifty-volume *Christian Library*—the pioneer Five-Foot Bookshelf! He also prepared textbooks in several languages, histories, a scientific book or two, including the curious *Primitive Physic*, which ran to more than forty editions; *Explanatory Notes on the New and Old Testaments*, an original version of the New Testament, and an *English Dictionary*. Few of these were masterpieces—as no one knew better than their author. But as Bishop Welch well says: "Popular literature was then unknown. It was highly desirable to teach and train the Methodist converts, and to defend the Methodist doctrine and practice. Under the urgency of friends or the pressure of circumstances, Wesley undertook literary tasks to which he felt himself unequal in knowledge and in time, but for which no other man was available. His ambition was to meet a need of the hour, to produce a literature simple enough for plain men to understand, cheap enough for poor men to buy. Up to 1756 two-thirds of his publications were sold at less than a shilling each, and a quarter of them at one penny."

His father's sumptuous tomes were read by few. Was it unfilial in the son to say, "A great book is a great evil"? "I believe that if angels should write books we should have very few folios." The first edition of the *Notes on the New Testament* was a luxurious quarto. But it was soon reissued in three pocket-size volumes, and afterward he rarely put out a bulky book. He found that small books were large sellers. Indeed, he tapped a new book-market and made rich profits, earning and giving away \$150,000 in his lifetime, and starting a business which still prospers. He trained his preachers to sell books, and he taught both preachers and people to read books. "It cannot be that the people should grow in grace," he said, "unless they give themselves to reading. A reading people will always be a knowing people. A people who talk much will know little. Press this upon them with your



might, and you will soon see the fruit of your labors." A preacher who would not read was dropped. Wesley exhorted them, "Spend all the morning, or at least five hours in the twenty-four, in reading the most useful books. 'But I read only the Bible.' Just so said George Bell; and what is the fruit? Why, now he neither reads the Bible nor anything else. If you use no book but the Bible, you have got above Saint Paul. He wanted others, too. 'But I have no taste for reading.' Contract a taste for it by use, or return to your trade. 'But I have no books.' I will give each of you, as fast as you will read them, books to the value of £5." (So it was that pumps were primed, even then!)

### III. PUBLISHER FOR THE MILLION

Wesley was the first evangelist to make the printing press an effective weapon in the Holy War. Before his time the common people spent none of their pence for reading matter, except ballads and chap-books. Indeed, there were few other cheap publications. Religious works, especially, were ponderous, costly, and written in learned language, and were read only by a limited number of intellectuals. But Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* had proved that small books in the common speech would go like the wind; Wesley followed up this discovery by issuing scores of tracts and booklets—regular "five-and-ten" merchandise—and scattering them broadcast. The idea of cheap books for the people was borrowed by Knight, Chambers and other secular publishers. Wesley's first London meeting-house, the Foundery, had a large "Book Room," and similar publishing enterprises characterize Methodism everywhere. Methodist Book Rooms are to be found in Melbourne, Cape Town, Lucknow, Shanghai, Tokyo, Bremen, Zurich, Stockholm, Rio de Janeiro, as well as in New York, Cincinnati, Chicago, Nashville and Dallas. Indeed, it has been half-seriously suggested that the idea of bringing not only printed matter but general merchandise within the reach of the multitudes who have only nickels and dimes to spend owes its origin to the fact that F. W. Woolworth was brought up in a Methodist home!

Wesley wrote no great book. One must seek his teachings through many volumes of sermons and his *Notes on the New Testament*, and such small books as the *Earnest Appeals to Men of Reason and Understanding*, *The Character of a Methodist*, and a *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*.

A great believer in the contagion of holy living, Wesley wrote or condensed for popular use many lives of eminent Christians, both Protestant and Catholic.

Controversial pamphlets figure largely in Wesleyan bibliography, though it must be said that the anti-Methodist output is much more voluminous and virulent. Wesley permitted many attacks to go unanswered, saying that he would not notice the little fellows who merely wished "to nibble at John Wesley." Any one who would see how odious the *odium theologicum* may become is referred to this historic controversy, in which the Calvinist doctrine of Predestination is pitted against the Arminian teaching of Free Grace. *The Gospel Magazine*, Calvinist champion, spoke of Wesley thus,

"O think of this, thou gray-haired sinner,  
Ere Satan pick thy bones for dinner."

Some of the combatants used language fit only for *Tobacco Road*. Toplady, author of "Rock of Ages," aimed a sizzling pamphlet at Wesley, entitled *An Old Fox Tarred and Feathered*, which led an irreverent bystander to remark that it might have been called "Go to Hell, by the author of *Come to Jesus*."

#### IV. THE ACTS OF AN APOSTLE

We have come along far enough to discover that with Wesley writing was not an end but a means—a tool to shape the thinking of his followers, and a weapon of defense. The life long ago went out of most of his writings. Their purpose had been amply served. Their yellowed pages are scanned nowadays chiefly by students who seek in them some explanation of the man and his times. But the embers of the old controversies cannot be fanned into flame. It may as well be admitted that—apart from the *Sermons*—only two of his literary productions are now valued for their intrinsic interest. They are probably the two by which he set less store and which in his lifetime attracted the least attention. They are only a by-product of his activities, but are so infused with his vitality that after two centuries the very pulse of his life still beats in them. These are his *Letters*, now available in eight noble volumes under the thorough editorship of the late John Telford, and his *Journal*, Standard Edition, edited with exemplary skill by Nehemiah Curnock. He who reads these writings gets close to the writer—knows what he did every day, almost every hour, what he read, what he felt, what he thought, how he took care of himself, how he ministered to others. Augustine Birrell has characterized the *Journal* as "the most amazing record of human exertion ever penned or endured." He further declares:

"If you want to get into the eighteenth century, to feel its pulse throb beneath your finger, be content sometimes to leave the letters of Horace Walpole unturned, resist the drowsy temptation to waste your time over the learned triflers who sleep in the seventeen volumes of Nichols—nay, even deny yourself your annual reading of Boswell or your biennial retreat with Sterne, and ride up and down the country with the greatest force in eighteenth-century England. No man lived nearer the center than John Wesley, neither Clive nor Pitt, neither Mansfield nor Johnson. You cannot cut him out of our national life. No single figure influenced so many minds, no single voice touched so many hearts. No other man did such a life's work for England. . . . He was ever a preacher and organizer, a laborer in the service of humanity. But, happily for us, his Journals remain and from them we can learn better than from anywhere else what manner of man he was and the character of the times during which he lived and moved and had his being."

#### V. THE LETTERS

The *Letters*, of which nearly 3,000 have been preserved, were addressed to men and women of every social rank and official station. They deal with a wide range of human interest, physical, mental, moral, spiritual—even political and economic. They explain, advise, admonish, prescribe, argue, contend, exhort. Usually expressed in a few carefully chosen words, they are perfectly clear and go straight to their mark. The writer's meaning is never in doubt. Especially pointed and pungent are those addressed to the earnest but unschooled mechanics, tradesmen and farmers whom he called into service as his helpers—untrained and unordained preachers of the gospel. In the plainest language he deals with their faults and flaws, rebukes their errors and shows them the way to excel. He wrote as one having authority over those who accepted his commission. He could be a stern schoolmaster dealing with dull and careless pupils, but he could also be a sympathetic and understanding father when they were ill or in trouble. He addressed them familiarly as "Jemmy," "Tommy," "Frankie," or "Sammy," as a Dominie might speak to his boys, but he was always the dignified master. None of his preachers ever called him "Jack."

The time eventually came when John Wesley was the one Englishman who was known from Land's End to John O'Groat's House. Birrell remarks that "he paid more turnpike tolls than any man in the three Kingdoms." His face and voice were familiar in every city and hamlet. His followers were numbered by tens of thousands; he had trusted correspondents in all parts of the British Isles and in the American colonies. He was acquainted with all sorts and conditions of men, and in the course of years had won general

recognition as a person of unusual intelligence. When he spoke or wrote on public questions, outside the field of religion, his utterances commanded respect. He received early, accurate, private information regarding conditions in America before the Revolutionary War broke out; and, far better than the King's ministers, he was aware of what the people were thinking and saying both at home and overseas. Thus, when the embattled farmers at Concord Bridge "fired the shot heard round the world," his ear was among the first to catch its prophetic sound and to perceive where the King's government was heading in. On June 15, 1775, barely forty-eight hours before the battle of Bunker Hill was fought, he addressed a memorable letter to Lord North, the Prime Minister, which, if heeded, might have changed the whole course of English and American history. He made no apology for speaking out. "Silence, I think," he says, "would be a sin against God, against my country, against my soul. . . . All my prejudices are against the Americans, for I am a High Churchman, the son of a High Churchman, bred up from my childhood in the highest notions of passive obedience and non-resistance; and yet, in spite of my long-rooted prejudices, I can not avoid thinking, if I think at all, these an oppressed people, asked for nothing more than their legal rights, and that in the most modest and inoffensive manner that the nature of the thing would allow." He has just had news of the Concord fight, in which he hears "400 regulars and only 40 of the militia were killed." He remarks, "What a disproportion in this! and this is the first essay of raw men against regular troops. You see, my Lord, whatever has been affirmed, these men will not be frightened. They will dispute every inch of ground, and, if they die, die sword in hand. Indeed some of our valiant officers say that 'Two thousand men will clear America of these rebels.' No, nor 20,000, be they rebels or not, and perhaps treble that number. They are as strong men as you; they are as valiant as you; if not abundantly more valiant, for they are one and all enthusiasts—enthusiasts for liberty. They are calm and deliberate enthusiasts; and we know how that principle breathes into softer souls stern love of war, thirst of vengeance and contempt of death. We know men animated with this spirit will leap into a fire or rush into a cannon's mouth. . . . But you are informed that they are divided amongst themselves. \*So, you are informed. So, no doubt, was Rehoboam informed about the ten tribes; so was Philip informed about the people of the Netherlands. No, my Lord, they are terribly united; not in the province of New England alone, but down as low as the Jerseys and Pennsylvania. The bulk of the

people are so united that to speak a word in favor of the present measures would almost endanger a man's life."

"Are we then able to conquer the Americans, suppose they are left to themselves; suppose all our neighbors stand stock-still and leave us and them to fight it out? But we are not sure of this. Nor are we sure that all our neighbors will stand stock-still. I doubt they have not promised it; and, if they had, could we rely on their promises? Do they not know where England and Ireland lie? And have they not troops as well as ships in readiness? All Europe is well-apprised of this; only the English know nothing of the matter. What if they find means to land 10,000 men [in Ireland]? Where are the troops to oppose them? Why, cutting the throats of their brethren in America!"

Wesley's final and characteristic suggestion was that, after all, the impending catastrophe might be a divine judgment on the nation for "the astonishing luxury of the rich and the shocking impiety of the poor." "But," he concludes with bitter irony, "We English are too wise to acknowledge that God has anything to do in the world. Otherwise would we not seek Him by fasting and prayer, before He lets the lifted thunder drop? O, my Lord, if your Lordship can do anything, let it not be wanting. For God's sake, for the sake of the King, of the nation, of your lovely family, remember Rehoboam. Remember Philip the Second. Remember Charles the First.

"Your Lordship's Obedient Servant,

JOHN WESLEY."

But the stubborn Prime Minister did nothing. The "lifted thunder" dropped! Gentleman John Burgoyne surrendered his Redcoat regiments at Saratoga to General Gates' "rabble in arms," and Earl Cornwallis found himself bottled up at Yorktown by Washington and the French fleet. The Thirteen Colonies became free and independent States. As for Wesley, himself, when the guns began to shoot, his hereditary loyalties strongly asserted themselves, and he publicly took the side of the King. His *Calm Address to the American Colonies* calmed no one, but brought a deluge of obloquy upon him at home and branded his followers in America as Tories. Not until his letter to Lord North was permitted to be published, nearly a century later, was it known with what clear foresight he had discerned the signs of the times and how valiantly he had warned the government of its doom.

Of Wesley's letters Leslie Stephen says, "It would be difficult to find any more direct, forcible, or pithy in expression. He writes as a man confined



within the narrow limits of time and space, whose thoughts are so well in hand that he can say everything needful within those limits." Edward Fitzgerald described the letters as examples of "pure, unaffected, undying English."

## VI. DICTION

Wesley's diction was as carefully planned as every other exercise of his body or mind. He often recommended his methods to others. Writing to a brother clergyman of university training he said:

"What is it constitutes a good style? Perspicuity, purity, propriety, strength and easiness, joined together. . . . As for me, I never think of my style at all, but just set down the words that come first. . . . When I transcribe anything for the press, . . . if I observe any stiff expression, I throw it out, neck and shoulders. . . . We [preachers], above all, if we think with the wise, yet must speak with the vulgar, because we are to instruct people of the lowest understanding. We should constantly use the most common, easy, little words (so they are pure and proper) which our language affords. When I had been a member of the university about ten years, I talked as you do now. But when I talked to plain people in the castle or the town, I observed they gaped and stared. This quickly obliged me to alter my style, and adopt the language of those I spoke to." And he sagely adds, "And yet there is a dignity in the simplicity which is not disagreeable to those of the highest rank." In another place Wesley said, "I no more write in a fine style than wear a fine coat. . . . Let who will admire French frippery, I am still for plain, sound English." There was an unintended compliment in the remark of a lady of quality after hearing him preach, "Is this the great Mr. Wesley of whom we hear so much? Why, the poorest person in the chapel might have understood him!"

A few specimens of Wesley's art of pithy expression must suffice:

"Cleanliness is next to godliness."

"Whenever war breaks out, God is forgotten."

"We Methodists think and let think."

"I look on all the world as my parish."

"I desire to have a league, offensive and defensive, with every soldier of Jesus Christ."

"If thy heart is as my heart, give me thy hand."

"God buries His workmen, but carries on His work."

"That execrable sum of all villainies, known as the Slave Trade."

As to money he said, "I gain all I can, save all I can, give all I can, that is all I have."



And, though the latest Bartlett attributes "Least said soonest mended" to Charles Dickens, I find John Wesley, a century before *David Copperfield*, writing "The least said, the soonest amended."

One is reluctant to leave the subject of Wesley's letters without quoting the last he ever penned. It was dated February 24, 1791, six days before his death, and the faltering lines show that, as he said, "Time has already shaken me by the hand." It was sent to William Wilberforce, who was beginning the long agitation in Parliament for the abolition of the Slave Trade. To this young champion the old warrior wrote:

"My Dear Sir:—Unless the divine power has raised you up to be as Athanasius *contra mundum*, I see not how you can go through your glorious enterprise, in opposing that execrable villainy, which is the scandal of religion, of England, and of human nature. Unless God has raised you up for this very thing, you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils; but if God be for you, who can be against you? Are all of them together stronger than God? O! be not weary in well doing. Go on in the name of God, and in the power of His might, till even American slavery (the vilest that ever saw the sun) shall vanish before it.

"Reading this morning a tract written by a poor African, I was particularly struck by that circumstance—that a man who has a black skin, being wronged or outraged by a white man, can have no redress; it being a law in our colonies that the oath of a black against a white goes for nothing. What villainy is this?

"That He who has guided you from your youth up, may continue to strengthen you in this, as in all things, is the prayer of, dear sir,

"Your affectionate servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."

The "tract written by a poor African," which was the last volume held in Wesley's trembling fingers, was doubtless *The Narrative of Olauda Equiano*, an ex-slave, alias Gustavus Vassa. This passing mention gives it unique interest.

## VII. THE HYMNS

The *Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley* fill thirteen substantial volumes. Thirteen volumes of hymns—6,000 hymns, enough to supply the land "where congregations ne'er break up and Sabbaths have no end!" The thought is staggering. Yet hymns played such a vital part in the Wesleyan Movement that they cannot be ignored. Scarcely one in a hundred of them is usable today; but the sixty survivors are sung in every Protestant church in Christendom. John's contributions are chiefly translations, done with taste and dignity. Charles was the true lyric poet, and often gave matchless expression to the most profound religious emotion of which the human

heart is capable. John watched over his occasional exuberance, and insisted that he eliminate the "namby-pambical." Hymn singing was a novelty in Anglican worship and these "Gospel Songs," set to popular airs, ballad music and sailors' chanties, caught the ear of the common people, who were unmoved by church anthems and paraphrases of the Psalms. "Mr. Wesley's opera" was Horace Walpole's description of Methodist singing. The songs put into words the lively emotions which were warming the hearts of so many Englishmen. They were issued in tuppenny leaflets, and pocket hymnals—for Methodist chapels had no pews and no racks for hymnals, and worshipers took their own books to meeting and home again, and used them in both places. Thus the most illiterate came to know by heart the essence of Wesley's teaching. They sang the doctrine of Free Grace until it became part of their subconscious life.

The emotional stir caused by the Methodist Movement, especially by its songs, has recently been linked with the great change which came over English literature in the eighteenth century.

When Wesley and the century were both young, English literature was in the doldrums. It had lost the feeling and fancy of the Elizabethan Age, and had become pedestrian, prosy and mechanical. But toward the century's close it blossomed forth again in the Romantic Movement, in which imagination, wonder, passion and emotion had full play. What had happened? The theory is advanced that the profound moving of the waters by Wesley and his preachers had something to do with it, albeit unwittingly. The upswing of a nation-wide movement, which began with "strangely warmed" hearts, and expressed its surging emotions in jubilant song, really started something beyond and outside of the humble Methodist societies. It stimulated excitement in a hushed-up age. It talked intimately and sang passionately of love—love divine, all loves excelling, of course. It throbbed with feeling and was haunted by mystery. Thus a taste for imaginative and exciting composition and expression was created—and lo! the Romantic Movement was born; with Keats, Shelley, Byron, Coleridge, Blake, Wordsworth, Scott and the rest. An amazing literary revolution, from the machine-finished, but uninspiring measures of Pope and Dryden, to the flashing splendors of *Childe Harold* and the magic of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*.

#### VIII. BOOKS ABOUT WESLEY

This brief sketch would be too brief, did it fail to mention the flood of

lives of the leader and comments on his work which have become increasingly numerous since the appearance of the Standard Edition of the *Letters and Journals* within the past two decades.

Wesley was scarcely in his grave in the little garden behind his chapel in City Road when a three-volume *Memoir* appeared from the pen of the Rev. John Hampson, rector of Sunderland, an ex-Methodist. It was not altogether a flattering portrait. Soon after came the competing biographies of Doctors Whitehead and Coke and Moore, each claiming to be authorized, but none of them satisfactory. In 1820 Robert Southey, Poet Laureate, on whose head as a lad Wesley had laid a fatherly hand, wrote the *Life* which was considered definitive, though Methodists thought it lacked understanding of the man and his Movement. Henry Moore and Richard Watson wrote biographies in the '20s to correct these faults. Then for half a century there was a lull, until in 1870 Luke Tyerman, with infinite pains, brought out his *Life and Times of John Wesley*, a treasure house of original documents, putting all subsequent biographers in his debt. The best of the more recent lives are those of Professor Winchester, Canon Overton, W. H. Hutton, Richard Green, C. E. Vulliamy, Arnold Lunn, Abram Lipsky, and Father Maximin Piette, a Franciscan, of the University of Brussels. John S. Simon's five topical volumes vie with Tyerman's in thoroughness of research and surpass them in breadth of view. Wesley's life has been written in many languages, notably French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Swedish, Dutch, and several of the Asiatic vernaculars. While most of these lives are translations, several of them are original studies of such importance that they have been put into English and cannot be overlooked by the serious student of the subject.

There has grown up an extensive literature dealing with various special aspects of Wesley's activity and influence. In this group are *Wesley and the Eighteenth Century*, Edwards (1933); *Wesley the Anglican*, Baines-Griffiths (1919); *John Wesley and the Church of England*, Simpson (1934); *The Philosophy of John Wesley*, Barber (1924); *The Rediscovery of John Wesley*, Cell (1935); *John Wesley and Modern Religion*, Lee (1936); *The Psychology of the Methodist Revival*, Dimond (1926); *John Wesley, Christian Philosopher and Church Founder*, Eayrs (1926); *John Wesley, as Sociologist, Theologian, Christian*, Faulkner (1918); *John Wesley Among the Scientists*, Collier (1928); *Wesley and His Century*, Fitchett (1906); *John Wesley, Evangelist*, Green (1905); *Economic Ethics of John Wesley*,

MacArthur (1937); *The Wesleyan Movement in the Industrial Revolution*, Warner (1930); *Methodism and the Working-Class Movements in England*, Wearmouth (1932); *Methodism and Politics*, Taylor (1935); *Wesley's Legacy to the World* (1929), and *The Conversion of the Wesleys*, Rattenbury (1938); *The Romantic Movement and Methodism*, Gill (1937); *John Wesley as a Social Reformer*, Thompson (1898); *John Wesley and the Evangelical Reaction*, Wedgwood (1870); *Methodist Music in the Eighteenth Century*, Lightwood (1927); *Son to Susanna, Private Life of John Wesley*, Harrison (1937); *Wesley's Standards in the Light of Today*, Hughes (1922); *John Wesley's Place in History*, Woodrow Wilson (1915); *Wesley and His Movement*, Candler (1912); *Wesley: Studies by Various Writers* (1902); *Rechtfertigung u. Heiligung, bei John Wesley*, von Eichen (1934); *Three Religious Leaders of Oxford*, Cadman (1916); *John Wesley in the Evolution of Protestantism*, Piette (1937); *England Before and After John Wesley*, Bready (1938). Fresh studies are appearing every year.

Of the half dozen novels based upon the Wesley family the best are *The Holy Lover*, by Marie Oemler, and *Hetty Wesley*, by Quiller-Couch.

The only adequate poetical tribute to John Wesley has come from Richard Watson Gilder, the son of a Methodist preacher and the namesake of one of Wesley's biographers. No more fitting epilogue could be found for this essay than these impassioned lines from the "ode" which he read at the celebration of the bicentennial of Wesley's birth, held at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, June, 1903:

"In these clear, piercing, piteous eyes behold,  
The very soul that over England flamed!  
Deep, pure, intense; consuming shame and ill;  
Convicting men of sin; making faith live;  
And—this the mightiest miracle of all—  
Creating God again in human hearts.

"Let not that image fade  
Ever, O God, from out the minds of men,  
Of him, Thy messenger and stainless priest,  
In a brute, sodden, and unfaithful time,  
Early and late, o'er land and sea, on-driven;  
In youth, in eager manhood, age extreme—  
Driven on forever, back and forth the world,  
By that divine, omnipotent desire—  
The hunger and the passion for men's souls."

# George Foster Peabody

J. HOWARD MELISH

## I

THREE graves crown a knoll which looks across Saratoga Lake to the Green Mountains of Vermont, some thirty miles distant. Above the central grave stands a Celtic cross, carved in pink and gray granite, and at its foot is a slab of similar stone on which bronze pine leaves are twined with roses. To the right of this grave is a small stone on which is inscribed, "Guardian Spirit Ever Here"; and to the left a somewhat smaller stone bearing the words, "Ever Close Friend." Behind the first grave rises a tall white pine, behind the second, a sturdy young oak. These graves are the final chapter in a spiritual romance of the twentieth century.

Katrina Nichols married Spencer Trask when he was like a young pine, and eleven years after his death she married George Foster Peabody, then like a noble oak, in the sixty-eighth year of his long life. For two years after the tragic death of his friend Peabody waited before he asked Katrina Trask to be his wife; for nine more years she waited before giving her consent. Marriage was for her a spiritual relationship for life and the Beyond. Those three had been intimately associated for nearly half a century. Peabody was known to husband and wife as "the Friend of the House," having his own quarters in their home; and, especially after his mother's death, he was a partner with them in every joy and sorrow. The scene of this romantic fellowship was a beautiful estate in northern New York, with majestic pines, sloping lawns, clear lakes and a stately garden. There Katrina Trask resided continuously, for she was an invalid most of her later years, and there the two men came from their busy life in the metropolis. To her also they brought their friends. Both men were more than financiers: one had founded the National Arts Club, and, unlike some who spent their money on masterpieces of the Old World, believed in encouraging young American painters by purchasing their works. The other was a man of many interests, especially those political, educational and religious. Katrina Trask herself wrote sonnets of rare beauty, plays and stories, and corresponded with like craftsmen both in America and abroad. The visitor to the Trask home found himself

in a versatile company, among men of action from the business world, and men of thought, poets, musicians, writers, educators, reformers and dreamers.

Such was the social background of George Foster Peabody, and his attitude toward life was largely colored by it. He helped greatly to create it, but he was also created by it. He had left school when a lad of fourteen, his father, a Northern merchant in Georgia, having been ruined by the Civil War. His mother, to meet the family crisis, ran a boardinghouse in Brooklyn after their return to the North, and young Peabody became a clerk in a wholesale dry-goods store, where he learned that business is primarily concerned with the production of things which men need. In those days of the seventies, business hours were from seven to seven, with no holidays or vacations, but this boy would go to the Young Men's Christian Association at night, where he could read and where he met young men of education. All through his life he learned from men, more than from books, and he became one of the most cultured men of his day, honored by Harvard with an M.A. and by the University of Georgia and Washington and Lee with LL.D. The Y.M.C.A., however, he called his Alma Mater. Strong men usually have strong mothers. Peabody would often say that the best lesson he learned was taught him by his mother. He was given to asking many questions, and one day his mother turned on him and exclaimed, "George, you must think. That is why you have been given a mind. Think, George, think."

In his early twenties Peabody met Spencer Trask, in some church work, and the friendship then begun lasted until death. Trask persuaded his friend to invest his savings, and especially his character and imagination, in a banking firm he was organizing. It was the period in American history when cities grew enormously, the beginning of the electric age. Thomas Edison turned to Spencer Trask & Company for financial aid, and so did Adolph Ochs in purchasing and reorganizing the *New York Times*. The firm was a pioneer in the public utility field, financing such corporations as the Brooklyn Edison, the New York Edison, the Cleveland Edison, and the Detroit Edison. Through General Palmer, one of the founders of Colorado, it also financed mining and railroad ventures. Such investments built new industries, created new employment, brought comforts to many homes. One day, going through a generating plant, Peabody saw some experiments being made with a mechanical stoker. Immediately he envisaged the possibility of the machine from the viewpoint of lightening the burden of the men who sweated before the old furnace; and that night he sent a lawyer to the Western city where the



machine was made and purchased the entire plant. He had little interest in making money. "I always knew I would some day be rich," he said, "but I was without ambition in that direction." Trask, on the contrary, sought wealth for its uses and its power; but he was aware of its insidiousness. At his death there was found in his wallet the saying of Jesus, "Beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

## II

In Cleveland Peabody met Tom Johnson, the militant mayor and follower of Henry George. Johnson's secretary was Newton D. Baker, later the pacifist Secretary of War during the World War. These three men became fast friends. As a young man in Brooklyn Peabody had helped to dethrone a corrupt political boss; and he had conceived the issue as one between honest and dishonest government, wasteful and efficient civic administration. He and other young men not only voted but joined the political clubs and sought to reform their party from within. Johnson opened his eyes to the root sources of municipal corruption; not in the ignorant foreign vote, nor in the party machinery, but in leading American citizens who sought public franchises and did not hesitate to pay the political boss for them. In one of his last letters to the press, Peabody recalled an incident of this period. A franchise was granted for a trolley surface railway in New York, and a quarter of a million dollars went to several aldermen who later were refugees in Canada. Before the ink was dry on the franchise a deed was filed to a trust company securing the rights to bondholders who could not be ousted, even though some politicians went to prison. It was characteristic of Peabody that, though engaged in the promotion of public utilities, his mind was not closed to the truth of Johnson's contention that private ownership in public utilities, in their very nature monopolistic, was contrary to the public interest. He became an advocate of public ownership.

In the councils of Spencer Trask & Company, investment bankers, there was division of opinion. Trask believed that within the limitation of honesty and integrity there might well be exploitation of financial opportunity. Peabody held to his social philosophy and privately supported the Public Ownership League, and the Henry George Association. The attorney for a certain Board of Directors reported on one occasion that the proposed action was entirely within the law: and the majority seemed satisfied. "But," asked Peabody, who was never a legalist in business or in religion, "is the action

ethically right?" Neither Trask nor Peabody converted the other in their many discussions. "Foster," Spencer would say in conclusion, "what you say is nothing but tommyrot." When the discussions were resumed at Saratoga the poetic and idealistic mind of Katrina Trask took the side of Peabody. Like the Countess of Warwick, she saw that the foundation on which her household rested, the sources of the income which maintained her rose garden and the loveliness of her rooms were open to serious questioning. What had been gained was within the law, and right according to the accepted creed of individualism, but her social conscience asked whether these things ought to be. Norman H. Davis wrote to Peabody shortly before his death: "What is important is that you never lost your sense of values, you did not become a slave of big business." And when death finally came to Spencer and Katrina Trask it was found in their wills that their entire wealth was to be devoted to the public good.

In the presidential campaign of 1904 Peabody was asked to be the treasurer of the National Democratic Party. Though not sympathetic with the conservative candidate, Judge Parker, he accepted and saw to it that the campaign, though unsuccessful, was finished without a financial deficit. In distributing the funds among the various states he required every state treasurer of the party to sign a receipt promising to spend the money only in accordance with the law. He also did an unprecedented thing, but one which has since become embodied in law: he published the contributions to the campaign before, and not after, the election. The regular politicians regarded him as a Don Quixote, and, before the campaign was two months old, he had reason to suspect there were two campaign chests, the official one which he controlled, and an unofficial one which they dispensed in ways long followed by both political parties.

In 1906, at the height of his career and when he was but fifty-four years old, Peabody retired from business. He realized that money, a considerable amount of which he had come to possess, was the result of other men's labors; that the only way a dollar can be actually produced is by real work. In his own words, "The successful understanding of the opportunities provided by the monopolistic feature of our present economic system had resulted in my having more of the products of other people's labor than I thought any one was fairly entitled to." He also felt that he needed to be rid of his portion of unearned increment, that it put one under the daily temptation of judging those who had not. "I then and there decided," he said to a friend, "to retire

from business and become my own executor, to administer for the people that which rightfully belonged to them." Moreover, he declined to accept further a share in the profits of his banking firm, on the ground that he would no longer do anything to earn them. His partner, Trask, did not share his thought and other friends urged him not to relieve himself of his money, because, whether he liked it or not, a man is recognized in the community for what he possesses rather than for what he is. He replied that if he was not honored for his character and service rendered he had no wish to be honored at all. And he recalled the words of the Master, "Be ye not called benefactors." That he made a wise decision events proved. In later life both President Wilson and President Franklin D. Roosevelt turned to Peabody, not because of his money, but because of his disinterestedness in public service, his understanding of the times, and the integrity of his character. In the enjoyment of physical health, with a generous fortune, and with rich experience acquired in American business and political life, Peabody set forth on his new career. He was in fact the embodiment of the dream many a high-minded man has had in his youth. When he became rich, what service he would render!

After his retirement from business he went to live at Lake George, where he owned a summer residence. A man with a generous income, he thought, could live among simple people and share it with them in many ways. In this he was mistaken and later gave up the plan as a failure. Lake George at that time was a summer place, where men worked for two months of the year and found nothing to do the balance of the time. So Peabody made work for them by opening up roads and trails through his estate and that of others. One day he called those men into his carriage house and said: "I have been thinking of your wives who have to get breakfast for you on these cold winter mornings. Hereafter work will begin at eight o'clock instead of seven and there will be an eight-hour day instead of ten. The wages will remain the same." He also encouraged the men to own their homes; he loaned them money for this purpose at four per cent, and when the man made his payments promptly he would find there was some unexpected discount that reduced that. Frequently mortgages were canceled, especially if the wife raised fine flowers or a son sang in the choir. He sought some excuse that made the man feel he had done some community service. When, however, a man failed to meet his obligation through drunkenness or shiftlessness his accounts were rigidly checked up. Many a man who desired to

reform, however, was assisted to a sanitarium. Peabody also encouraged the village to build a public library and purchase a public park. But his experiments at Lake George were disappointing and later he moved to Saratoga Springs.

### III

One of the first causes Peabody served was education in the South. He never forgot that he had been born in Columbus, Georgia, and had spent the first thirteen years of his life there. He had been an intimate friend of General Armstrong, the founder of Hampton Institute, and had served as a trustee since 1884. To his mind the South, with its purest surviving strain of the Anglo-Saxon on this continent, held the great future of the United States. What kept back the South was the presence of the Negro in such large numbers. To the question of the education of the Negro Peabody gave much thought. The South, he held, cannot progress unless the black man is fitted to govern himself and is secure in the knowledge that his legal right of suffrage will not be denied him. He thought that socially the problem would take a long time to solve, but that at the time the social side was of minor importance. False ideas, economic barriers and a wrong conception of patriotism had made for discord and strife, where harmony and international brotherhood should reign. Looking back, on his eightieth birthday, he said: "The years have taught me that wisely ordered educational effort is the supreme hope of mankind—and wisely ordered educational effort is nothing but thinking."

An educational renaissance was starting in the South under the leadership of such men as E. A. Alderman, later president of the University of Virginia; Charles W. Dabney, son of Stonewall Jackson's chief of staff; and Dr. J. L. M. Curry, who had been active in the Confederacy. Both white and Negro schools, because of the poverty following the Civil War, were inadequate; the Negro had only a few weeks' schooling in the year, and the white little more. A group of young educators became evangelists of education, and, like the old circuit riders, went from village to village, educating public opinion in favor of schools, primarily for white children but without neglecting the black. This campaign appealed to Peabody, and in connection with it he made his most constructive contribution to American life. He brought together for a period each year at his home at Lake George both these Southerners and kindred souls in the North, and there every aspect

of education, from hookworm to land purchase, was discussed. No publicity was given to such meetings and no record of financial contributions was kept; but the Southern educators returned to their hard task with the sense that theirs was a national work, and the North was intelligent and co-operative. Out of those conferences came the Southern Education Board, which later merged into the General Education Board, of which Peabody became the first treasurer.

Dr. and Mrs. H. A. Hunt were cultured colored people connected with Atlanta University. They tell how Peabody encouraged them to leave their pleasant environment and go into the heart of the black belt of Georgia and start the Fort Valley High and Industrial School. When later the General Education Board was approached for aid to this school it required as a condition that the school have a certain amount in its endowment fund. "Mr. Peabody," said Doctor Hunt, "saw to it that we were able to meet the condition." He went before the General Convention of the Episcopal Church, proposing that it, with its membership of wealthy people in North and South, should raise several million dollars for education in the South. The American Church Institute for work among the colored people was started by him, and for many years he acted as its treasurer. Peabody was an interpreter of the South to the North and of the North to the South. To him Negro education was a national responsibility.

Nor was he forgetful of the white population in his state of Georgia. The University of Georgia, one of the oldest state colleges in America, was founded in the opening years of the century to raise up an educated gentry and to keep its youth on the soil. In the poverty of post-bellum days and the coming to political power of a new element of the people, the college was starved by the legislature. How could Georgia be brought to realize the importance of higher education? Peabody chartered a train and invited the entire legislature to be his guests on a visit to the University of Wisconsin. Wisconsin was also an agricultural state, with about the same resources as Georgia, and possessed one of the great state universities. This friend of Georgia thought that seeing is believing and wanted the Georgians to see what had been done elsewhere. On its return to Georgia the legislature increased the appropriations for the university by many thousands. Peabody held that his comparatively small investment in the trip was the equivalent of an endowment of several millions. He himself gave to the university its library building, and also funds for establishing a chair of forestry. "What



is your present need?" I heard him ask the principal of a normal school devoted to the training of teachers for white rural schools. The answer was, \$50,000 for a certain building. The principal was told to go ahead with his building project and the money would be forthcoming as needed. Such generous gifts were made quietly and unobtrusively and known at the time only to the few concerned. It was one of his convictions that large giving had the effect of discouraging the small givers from doing their part.

#### IV

When Spencer Trask was killed in a railroad accident, in 1909, his friend Peabody succeeded him as chairman of the Saratoga Springs Commission. The Springs at Saratoga, whose healing waters were recognized by the Indians, had been exploited; their carbonic gas had been drawn off, and, since the gas forced the waters to the surface, they had ceased to flow. Saratoga fell from its position as a health resort and had become little more than a racing ground and all that goes with it. Trask conceived the idea of the purchase of the Springs by the state and the re-establishment of the place as an American spa similar to the spas of Europe. Today this dream has come true and the state of New York has one of the great health resorts of the world. At the memorial service to Peabody, Governor Lehman said truly, "I am convinced that the full development of Saratoga Springs as a public health resort could not have been achieved without the wise leadership, the sound judgment and the enthusiastic inspiration of the man in whose honor we are met today." One of the first things Peabody did was to bring from Europe the leading authority on springs and spas and have the various waters scientifically analyzed. He also had the entire region surveyed by a landscape artist. Peabody was himself a man of creative imagination and when the section was a waste, visualized what has since come to pass. But his greatest contribution to the project was himself, his disinterestedness and his integrity. Many governors and legislators could truly say of themselves in Governor Lehman's words, "In my many talks with him I always came away with a feeling that here was a man in whom justice, tolerance, courage, honesty and sincerity were almost a religion. He demanded the exercise of these qualities in his friends, but he demanded them more of himself than of anyone else." In the Hall of Springs today is a bronze plaque, dedicated to him as chairman of the first Commission, and on it are fittingly inscribed these words, "Lover of Men."



Peabody's interest in conservation also found expression in the development of the recreational facilities of the forest preserves of New York, and the state-wide reforestation program. He also strongly supported Governor Roosevelt in his plans to retire submarginal farm lands by state purchase and to reforest them. At Lake George he owned several hundred acres of forest, some on the shore line, others on the top of Prospect Mountain, having purchased the latter in order to keep it from being turned into a gambling resort. The valuable property on the shore known as Hearthstone Park he gave to the state, and it is today the most popular free campsite in the forest preserve, used by 35,000 people in one season. Prospect Mountain was also given to the state. Peabody was a tower of strength to the men and women who have fought to keep the forest preserve in its original wilderness condition. "Captain," I heard him say as we sailed down Lake George, "tell the road commissioner not to cut the foliage on that public road, it mars the beauty of the woods." "Yes, sir," replied the captain, "I will tell him just what you say." "But don't you think so?" said Peabody, suspecting that his employee, the captain, was of a different mind; for he respected the opinion of simple men and often consulted them. "No, sir," replied the captain. "You see, Mr. Peabody, you city people have come here and bought the entire shore line of the lake. Those public roads, every mile, make it possible for the country people to approach the lake; and if that road is effaced, soon the country people will not know they have rights to the lake." "Captain," answered Peabody, "you are right; don't speak to the commissioner." When he was a boy his family spent their vacation at Warm Springs, Georgia. Peabody heard the Springs were for sale and he purchased them. He persuaded his friend Franklin D. Roosevelt to go there for its waters, and today Warm Springs are famous as a health resort.

V

In two causes especially did Katrina Trask interest her constant friend. One was the Woman's Suffrage movement and the other was world peace. She had written a stirring poem entitled "An Army With Banners." Trask was sympathetic and saw that it was published, but Peabody believed the cause of women should be assisted by men and he organized the Men's League for Women's Suffrage, of which he became the one and only president. To the cause of peace he also devoted money and time. He followed Tolstoi in his thought, taking the position of passive resistance, which he believed

meant, not a longing for peace and a vague hope that it may some day come to pass, but active opposition to the passions that make for war and the policies that stir up national hatred. The imperialism which followed the Spanish American War and claimed the Philippines had his active opposition. In the World War Woodrow Wilson's League of Nations won his enthusiastic support and he hailed the utterance, "The reign of law based upon the consent of the governed and supported by the organized opinion of mankind," as the high statesmanship for the new day. "In the Vanguard" was the title of Katrina Trask's anti-war play. In the character of Philip she had portrayed Peabody as the heroic spirit who came to see that war was wrong and dared all things for peace.

There was a time when Katrina Trask became apprehensive about the friend of the house. He seemed to her in danger of becoming dogmatic and less open-minded. Peabody and Trask took positions which were antagonistic and unreconcilable. Trask saw the growing concentration of financial power in the hands of the few and believed in it; Peabody saw in it the great issue between wealth and commonwealth. In politics Trask sided with President Taft, while Peabody hailed Woodrow Wilson's "New Freedom" as a gospel for the day. Both men used the word democracy, but in different senses. To Peabody democracy had economic implications. It was primarily faith in men and women, but for him men and women were not individual grains of sand forming collectively a pile, but men and women socially forming a community. His philosophy was not that of individualism, nor that of socialism, but that of a democratic society. He held that it is within the province of this democratic society to do what it will. Government is not its master but its servant. The Constitution is not an anchor to hold it in safe harbors but its chart and compass for an adventurous voyage. "My fifty-four years in business experience," he wrote later, "does not impress upon me the sacredness of much of the ownership of property." He became an advocate of a constitutional change to remove from the Constitution the clauses guaranteeing property rights, and held that until this is done the people will find it difficult to work out their economic salvation. Democratic society, making free use of government, must more and more enter the field of economics and deprive the few of the financial power which they had obtained through the intelligent use of monopolistic tendencies. The national ownership of railways and government ownership of public utilities were steps in this direction. These he advocated among men who did not share his

mind, and who thought of him as Festus did of Saint Paul: "Thou art beside thyself: much learning doth make thee mad."

## VI

Peabody's economic philosophy had been worked out in the midst of the business world, not by reading books and forming an ideology, but by experiencing the operation of economic power and knowing the men who wielded it. Here it was difficult for Katrina Trask to follow him. In the field of religion, however, she fully understood, and rejoiced in his continuous growth. She was religious, given to fasting and prayer, but also given to thinking. Womanlike, she reached conclusions by processes of her own, while her male companions in the spiritual pilgrimage plodded step by step. In their youth the two Trasks and Peabody belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church. When the Trasks moved to Saratoga Springs, where there was no such church, they joined the Episcopal Church. Neither Episcopal orders nor historic creeds appealed to Peabody, but the movement for a united Christendom led by the Episcopal Church at that time enlisted his interest, and he transferred his membership to the Church of the Holy Trinity, Brooklyn. He had joined the Dutch Reformed Church by profession of faith and that religious experience was a vital thing. He declined to be confirmed in the Episcopal Church as likely to impugn the reality of his spiritual experience, and the rector of Holy Trinity, Dr. Charles Henry Hall, agreed with him. He was received at the Holy Communion without confirmation.

The Church of the Holy Trinity gave Peabody an opportunity which he welcomed and of which he made generous use. It was one of the beautiful Gothic churches in America, with stained-glass windows of remarkable design and with unique choral music under the direction of Dudley Buck. Peabody loved music, though he could not carry a tune; his nephew, a graduate of Beaux Arts, called him a natural-born architect, and he had a cultivated interest in paintings and lovely things. For half a century he gave generously to the maintenance of the architecture, music and windows of his church. When the rectorship fell vacant through death or removal he hunted the country for men to fill it. One of the rectors was Dr. Samuel D. McConnell, distinguished in his day as a liberal theologian and preacher. No man, Peabody said in later years, did more to reconcile for him religion and science than did McConnell. He made it possible for him to outgrow the religion of authority based on the Bible and take an intelligent hold on the religion

of the spirit based on experience. When conditions changed in Brooklyn and the so-called social gospel came to the fore, it was Peabody who prevailed upon the vestry to fill the vacant rectorship with a leader for the new day, and who also backed him up in his social preaching and in organizing the parish for service to the community. With the intelligent and generous support of such a layman as Peabody, what otherwise might have been an arduous task became comparatively easy and inspiring. He was a great and useful layman, the kind every minister prays might be given to him for the cause of Christ. At a time when social religion was thought to be Socialism, and the religious questioning of financial power was denounced as Communism, the presence of such an intelligent and loyal layman was a tower of strength.

Peabody was not only a Christian, with a deeply spiritual experience; he was a wise, generous and statesmanlike Churchman. One of his cardinal beliefs was that all power belonged unto God and that each man is a steward for Christ and the Church. He had an abiding faith in Providence. Bunyan in his allegory had drawn the immortal picture of Mr. Greatheart, the man who most cheered Christian on his pilgrimage. To a great company of men and women in many walks of life George Foster Peabody was Mr. Greatheart. Oswald Garrison Villard has called him "almost the last figure of a great generation." We trust not, but rather that he may find his imitators in Church and nation. His was a strongly integrated and well-knit personality, under the influence of unquestioned ideals and a masterful purpose. He was not weakened by inner conflict nor inhibited by self-willed and emotional reactions. He knew that he could do what he wished to do; and he did it. His strength was as the strength of ten because his heart was pure. He died as he had lived, in the peace of a self-possessed manhood. "A man who has his faculties unimpaired," he said a few hours before he died, "knows when his time has come. Within a few days I shall not be here." He wanted to live to 1940, so keen was his interest in the next presidential election, but the strong heart was not the match of the strong mind; it ceased to beat on March 4, 1938, in his eighty-fifth year. And his spirit returned to the God who gave it, whom he had known and served from the days of his youth.

## Two Years' Achievements in Palestinian Archaeology

C. C. McCOWN

**I**N spite of the disturbed condition of Palestine since April, 1936, remarkable progress has been made by those who have sought its treasures of historical information. Important surveys of little-known regions have been made, buildings discovered by chance have been uncovered and recorded, the work at old excavations has been continued, and new sites have been attacked. Altogether, a conservative estimate can list some thirty-five places in which discoveries of archaeological interest have been made since the summer of 1936, when a survey of recent archaeological discoveries was prepared for RELIGION IN LIFE. In addition there have been very important publications of discoveries which could be described only in the most general terms before the discoverer himself made them known. In some instances enforced cessation of digging has resulted in greater immediate profit to the public, which must read about discoveries instead of seeing them. Only a small portion of all these results can be mentioned.

The fuller publication of the results of such excavations as those at Wad' el-Mugharah, Jericho, Megiddo, and Lachish emphasizes the great importance of Palestine for the physical and cultural as well as religious history of the Western world. At present it offers the most complete and continuous picture of human history that is available.

### PALEONTOLOGY AND PREHISTORY

Numerous epoch-making discoveries in prehistoric times have not signalized the past two years. Excavations have been carried on only at Bethlehem and near Jisr Benat Ya'qub, where the road to Damascus crosses the Jordan. At the latter place soundings were made near the old bridge by Dr. M. Stekelis, Professor Picard, and other members of the Hebrew University as the result of a chance discovery of elephant bones. Thus far in ancient gravels in the river bed and on the present shore an elephant's tusk six and a half feet long, and fragments of an elephant's jaw, of tusks, molars, and various broken bones have come to light. Miss Dorothy M. A. Bate pro-



visionally identifies them as probably belonging to a distinct Pleistocene type, *Elephas trogontherii* Pohlig. With the bones were hand axes and other implements of basalt and flint of Lower and Upper Acheulean types, some of them, I am told, exhibiting technique which resembles level E of Mugharet et-Tabun. The significance of these finds is that man is here discovered living, not in caves only, but in the open, and in the upper Jordan valley possibly as early as the second interglacial period.

At Bethlehem further excavations by Miss Bate and Miss E. M. Gardner have added much material which allows more definite conclusions. The deposits, by far the earliest yet discovered in Palestine, reveal the presence of various feline and bovine types; species of hippopotamus, rhinoceros, and elephant; a gigantic and a diminutive tortoise; and, most interesting of all, the *Hipparion*, a diminutive horse, already known from various Tertiary deposits in Asia and America, India and East Africa. The fauna belongs to the earliest Pleistocene and, while of Asiatic origin, forms a link between Asia and East Africa. Some prehistorians now doubt whether the supposed stone tools, thought to be eoliths of pre-Chellean times, were made by man. Their flaking may have been due merely to the pressure of the deposits above them.

For the British School of Archaeology at Jerusalem, Mr. J. D. Waechter found at Wadi Dhobai, about twenty-five miles east-southeast of 'Amman, six Stone Age sites with a culture which is sufficiently unique to receive a name, Dhobaian. It has strong resemblances to the lower levels of Jericho. From two other sites came material similar to that of level F at Mugharet el-Wad in Palestine. Thus both the very early and the later Stone Age have come to life in Transjordan.

The publication of the first sumptuous volume of the final report on the excavations at Wad' el-Mughara, *The Stone Age of Mount Carmel*, by Miss Dorothy Garrod and Miss Bate, with a chapter on Mugharet es-Sukhul by Mr. T. D. McCown, makes available a wealth of information on paleontology and on Stone Age cultures. A second volume, now in the press, will describe the skeletal material.

The first volume sets forth the remarkable succession of Stone Age cultures which cover as much, possibly, as 100,000 years. The paleontology, of which little preliminary notice has been given, is especially interesting, since the detailed study of the animal remains found in the caves and terraces discovers some remarkable correlations between changes in the climate, the



fauna, and the culture levels. Along with the bones of other animals, the relative frequency of bones of *Dama Mesopotamica* (a deer), which loved forests and moisture, and the gazelle, which prefers a dry climate, shows remarkable fluctuations of climate. Palestine never had an arctic climate. In the Upper Acheulean period, the earliest but one discovered, tropical conditions prevailed. During the period to which the remarkable skeletons of Mugharet es-Sukhul belong, gradual desiccation brought a warm, dry climate but with abundant rivers, for the crocodile, the hippopotamus, and the rhinoceros are found. Then follows an abrupt break in the fauna, though not in the flint industries, for the great pachyderms disappear permanently. Wet conditions with a slight fall in temperature reach a high point in the Upper Levallois-Mousterian period. From that time on there was a gradual recession toward a dry, warm climate, which, with one minor oscillation, continued down to the Natufian (Mesolithic) period, when the deer practically disappears. The caves offer no certain indications as to the climate after the Mesolithic period. The remains show that Palestine was the scene of very considerable evolutionary activity at times, and that it was in the path of migration from Asia to Africa, and therefore subject to great immigrations. It has always had a highly varied fauna.

#### LACHISH

No Palestinian archaeologist, I think, will feel any unjust discrimination if I mention *The Lachish Letters* by Professor Harry Torczyner as the most exciting single publication of the last two years. Eighteen documents, written perhaps while Nebuchadrezzar was besieging Jerusalem, in script such as Baruch must have been using at that very time to record the prophecies of Jeremiah, represent a treasure such as Palestinian soil has never before disgorged. Their interpretation is beset with all the uncertainties which inevitably surround letters dealing with personal matters and current events about which the modern can only guess, and they provide scholars matter for endless discussion; but they nevertheless afford unprecedented aid in visualizing the situation in Judah just before the Exile.

According to the editor, one letter (No. III), which mentions a "prophet" in connection with a "commander of the army" who had gone to Egypt, is actually a supplement to the story of the unpatriotic prophet Uriah in Jeremiah 26. 20-23. Others argue that the prophet is Jeremiah himself. Letter IV, where the writer says, "We are watching the signal stations of

Lachish, according to all the signs which my lord gives, for we do not see (the signals of) Azekah," would seem to be written after the time when, according to Jeremiah 34. 7, Jerusalem, Azekah, and Lachish were the only cities which were not in Babylonian hands. Incidentally the sentence proves that the letter was written to Lachish and settles the identification of Tell ed-Duweir with that most important city. The strength of the double wall of fortification around the immense mound explains how it could hold out so well against the powerful enemy.

Lachish has favored the student of epigraphy with a series of short inscriptions beginning in the second millennium B. C., in scripts of several kinds, and finally with a scribbling of the first five letters of the Hebrew alphabet from left to right on a step of a Hebrew palace. A certain degree of literacy must have prevailed here at all periods. Numerous scarabs with names of the Pharaohs assist in determining the chronology. It is evident that the city was continuously prosperous during some six hundred years of Egyptian rule, and then suffered a serious destruction, to build up again under the Hebrews. It seems to have suffered two destructions, with only a short interval between at the time of the Babylonian conquest, and then become a great center again under Persian rule, before it ceased to be.

*Lachish I*, the first volume of the "Wellcome Archaeological Research Publications," which suggests so much of the alternating prosperity and calamity in Palestine's history, deepens one's sense of the tragedy in life, for, as one opens the volume to the title page, one finds an insert bearing Mr. Starkey's fine and vigorous face and a notice of his death near Hebron at the hands of bandits on January 10, 1938, seven days after his forty-third birthday. The work to which he had given so much of abundant energy and resourcefulness was continued by his staff under the competent direction of Mr. Lankester Harding, his former assistant, now Curator of Antiquities in Transjordan.

#### HISTORY OF THE ALPHABET

One of the most interesting developments of recent Palestinian archaeology has been its contribution to the history of the alphabet. Beginning in December, 1929, when a student of the American School of Oriental Research at Jerusalem picked up on the mound of Gezer a broken bit of pottery on which three letters had been scratched before the vessel was fired (1600 B. C.), and continued in May, 1930, by Professor Elihu Grant's find of a potsherd

with characters in ink at Beth Shemesh (1400 B. C.), the discoveries have climaxed at Lachish in the short legends on pottery just mentioned and four primitive letters beautifully carved on a bronze dagger. Because of their brevity and their often fragmentary condition, these documents can be only tentatively deciphered, but they can be dated between the sixteenth and thirteenth centuries B. C. When compared with the Proto-Sinaitic alphabet (1800 B. C.?) discovered at the porphyry mines at Serabit el-Khadim, and with other materials recently found in Syria, including the cuneiform alphabet of Ras Shamra and several as yet undeciphered alphabets, they illustrate the numerous attempts that were being made in the second millennium to develop a satisfactory alphabet, and they assist in following its evolution. Whether the alphabet actually originated in the Sinaitic peninsula and southern Palestine, in Egypt, in Syria, or in Babylonia is, at the moment, a matter of earnest discussion.

#### MEGIDDO

The only site now being excavated which can compete with Lachish in interest is Megiddo, where the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago has been at work since 1925. A recent appropriation by the International Education Board of New York City provides for its further continuance. The discoveries of the past two years at Megiddo more than justify such a provision. Historically the site has made a large contribution. The care and intelligence with which the work has been prosecuted have enabled excavators to unravel the complicated history of the site and establish a remarkable series of twenty strata on the mound running from 300 or 400 B. C. to before 2500 B. C. On the east slope they have a series of seven strata and a large number of tombs which have given a vast amount of information about the Bronze Age and which now can be tied in with the lower strata on the top. In stone-cut store bins on the mound pottery appears which resembles the earliest found at Jericho. The five upper strata afford the fullest knowledge as yet available of conditions in Palestine from the time of Saul to the Persian period.

However, until two years ago Megiddo, its size and importance considered, had been strangely lacking in first-rate museum pieces; there had been no startling inscriptions and too few statuettes or other objects of artistic value. The season of 1936-7, however, changed all of this. During the spring over two hundred pieces of carved ivory were found cached in a vault in a palace which otherwise was looted practically clean. It is "the

most comprehensive example of twelfth-century B. C. 'Phoenician' art yet known." There were decorated tusks, a plaque having a stylized lotus design with blue inlay, and another incised with a scene showing captives and offerings being presented to a prince seated on a throne which rested on sphinxes. There were figurines, carvings of human heads, birds' heads, and the head of a horned animal, Bes figures, and a human-headed sphinx clasping a cup. An ivory comb has an ibex attacked by a doglike beast with claws like fingers. An ivory gaming board was inlaid with gold. A small ivory box decorated on all sides with figures of sphinxes and lions had a cartouche of Ramses III (1198-1167), and thus serves to date the board to the earlier part of the twelfth century, about the time of the arrival of the Philistines. The ivories were not alone. Under the floor in a previous palace on the same site was a treasure hoard of various objects of ivory, lapis lazuli, electrum, and gold, including a magnificent gold bowl in the form of a shell.

#### THE EGYPTIAN BORDER

After excavations running through 1935, 1936, and 1937, and occupying some six months in all, Sir Flinders and Lady Petrie, with a small corps of self-sacrificing assistants, excavated an area "about 100 feet across" in a mound called Tell Abu Selimeh near the police post named after the *weli* of Sheikh Abu Zuweyid by the coast on the Egyptian side of the Palestinian border. On the basis of twelve hundred objects discovered and registered, Sir Flinders dates the earliest town, which was built on the sand, in the eighteenth dynasty, probably the time of Harmhab. A dozen towns succeeded one another down to the first century A. D. The *pax Romana* made a frontier fortress unnecessary, and the place, he believes, became a seaside resort, to be identified with Anthedon. Sir Flinders makes much of the registration of all objects in five-inch levels and believes that the curve resulting from plotting their numbers corresponds to the historical events, reflecting all the fluctuations of the economic life.

#### JERUSALEM

In Jerusalem there have been no archaeological excavations, but there have been several interesting discoveries. At the Damascus Gate and along the north wall clearances intended to provide for the beautification of the area resulted in the discovery of remnants of a line of wall which exhibits Herodian features and under the present gate itself the triple arches of a much

older gate. One's natural reaction is to take the "Herodian" wall as the outer north wall in Jesus' day. But the defenders of the traditional site of the Holy Sepulchre have a counterargument ready. It was, they say, the wall of Herod Agrippa, and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is thus still left hypothetically "without the gate."

#### GALILEE

One of the most remarkable discoveries of recent years has been the great Jewish catacomb at Sheikh Abreiq. The writer spent the better part of a night exploring it in April, 1936, in company with Dr. B. Maisler, who became the excavator. But impressive as it then seemed, further discoveries during successive periods of excavation have revealed a wealth of information about life in Galilee during the second, third, and fourth centuries of the Christian era which could not then be anticipated. Inscriptions, paintings, drawings, pottery, and a great variety of architectural forms carved in the soft *nari* limestone illustrate Jewish art, architecture, and epigraphy, not only in Palestine but also in neighboring countries. For, it is evident, Jews from distant places such as Palmyra and Nabatea, possibly even Italy, were buried there. If the place was the Beth She'arim, or Besara, which is mentioned in the Talmud as one of the seats of the Sanhedrin and the burial place of the patriarch Judah I *hannasi* (135-200 A. D.), as the excavator thinks, the full clearance of the tombs of the neighborhood is extremely important.

At a ruin called Khirbet el-Mallahah, midway between Acre and Achzib, on a hillside, a station for travelers was found. Doctor Maisler cleared it for the Jewish Palestine Exploration Society and found the remains of a sumptuous building of the third century A. D. It had mosaic pavements and ornamentation of white marble, along with *terra sigillata* ware and other fine pottery. Nearby were ponds for a salt industry and also tombs of the early Christian centuries.

#### UMAIYAD PALACES

Further excavation by the Görres-Gesellschaft and the National Museum of Berlin at Khirbet Minyeh on the Plain of Gennesaret proves that its assignment to the Arab period was correct and allows a more precise dating for its final phase. An inscription of Calif Walid and two dinars of Umayyad califs place the construction of a mosque and a large palace, which adjoin the castlelike structure, in the first part of the eighth century. Mosaic floors hav-

ing geometrical ornaments and looking like pleated mats or carpets were found. However, the structure seems not to have been completed. The demonstration that Capernaum could not have existed on this spot is carried a step beyond complete demonstration.

Discoveries near Jericho join with those at Khirbet Minyeh to enlarge our knowledge of the prosperous Umayyad period in Palestine. Under the direction of Mr. D. C. Baramki, the Department of Antiquities has excavated a very remarkable palace at a spot now called Khirbet el-Mefjer. The results, now being published in the *Quarterly* of the Department, exhibit the variety and exuberance of geometrical and stylized plant motifs which characterize Arab art. The courts, halls, and large underground bath illustrate the luxury which the officers of the Umayyad court allowed themselves.

#### TRANSJORDAN

The explorations and excavations which Dr. Nelson Glueck, Director of the American School of Oriental Research at Jerusalem, has carried on in southern Transjordan vie in interest with the great expeditions at Lachish and Megiddo. When Director Glueck went to Palestine in the summer of 1936 he took with him a car especially constructed for exploring the steppe regions where, during his previous year as director (1932-33), he had made many significant discoveries. He immediately resumed his program of exploration in Transjordan, where fortunately peace reigns. During various trips in 1936 he added to the map of Edom and especially of Moab over one hundred new sites, carefully examined and dated by surface pottery, among some four hundred previously visited. The eastern boundary of Moab was found to be marked by a series of fortresses and frontier posts.

In 1937-38 Professor Glueck extended his survey to the Ammonite-Amorite region as far as the Wadi ez-Zerqa (the Jabbok). Some one hundred and fifty sites have been examined, and it has now been possible to date the puzzling "megolithic" round towers of the *malfuf* type to the Early Iron period.

In all of this region the occupation during the late Early Bronze and early Middle Bronze periods (2300-1800 B. C.) was found to be more considerable than at first thought, but again no evidence of sedentary occupation was found in Moab during the remainder of the Middle Bronze and practically the whole of the Late Bronze period, down to the thirteenth century, shortly before 1200 B. C. From that time on, however, sites showing Early



Iron, Hellenistic, Nabatean, Roman, Byzantine, and Arab pottery proved continuous occupation.

Professor Glueck believes that the absence of sedentary occupation in Moab during the Late Bronze period made it possible for the Hebrew tribes to find their way by that roundabout route from the Sinaitic peninsula into western Palestine, whereas the Edomites, who had already developed a somewhat highly organized agricultural and partly industrial civilization, were strong enough to prevent the nomadic Hebrews from crossing their land.

The École Biblique et Archéologique Française of the Dominican monastery at Jerusalem undertook two expeditions of exploration and survey, one in the 'Arabah, the other in the neighborhood of es-Salt. Thus what was lacking in the former surveys of Eastern Palestine is rapidly being made up. A mass of material is being added to that of Conder, Schumacher, Musil, von Domaszewski, and others.

Among the many attractive sites visited by Professor Glueck were two at which he has since carried on excavations. In the spring of 1937, at Khirbet et-Tannur he uncovered a fascinating Nabatean temple where East and West, Greek and semitic art and religion meet and mingle in astonishing fashion. Situated on an isolated hill, on Wad' el-Hesa, it was a dominating feature of the landscape for miles around. Oriented almost due east, it had a great central altar on a raised inner platform back of an eastern outer court. On the north and south sides of the shrine and court were a series of triclinia for feasting, some of them well paved and surrounded on three sides by a high rebated bench. Certain striking resemblances to the Temple at Jerusalem are at once apparent.

The temple's courts and rooms were elaborate, but its sculptures, mostly reliefs, were, to western eyes, its most astonishing feature. A bust of a Tyche with turret crown was surrounded by a circle containing the signs of the zodiac. Other reliefs showed a goddess with fish or dolphin attributes in one case, and with stalks of grain in another. A semicircular panel with a huge bust of a goddess, doubtless Atargatis, whose face is covered with leaves and whose locks of hair roughly resemble ears of grain, had been placed over the entrance to the raised inner court. On the east façade of the shrine was a large relief of Zeus-Haddad, carrying his thunderbolt and seated between two lions. An altar with blackened incrustations of burned incense bore small reliefs on all four sides. In spite of some intentional and some accidental defacement, most of the figures, some crude, some fairly well carved, are

identifiable. The structure had been three times rebuilt, doubtless after destructive earthquakes. Only a few inscriptions were found, some Greek, some Nabatean. One of the latter, in honor of Haretat (Aretas) and his queen Huldu, is dated in the second year of his reign, which is 7 B. C.

In November, 1936, Doctor Glueck made preliminary soundings at Tell el-Kheleifi on the north shore of the Gulf of 'Aqabah, about three and one half kilometers northwest of the present village of 'Aqabah and about five hundred and fifty meters from the sea. Herr Fritz Frank had suggested that it was the site of ancient Ezion-Geber. The surface pottery agreed as to date and the soundings disclosed mud brick houses. Excavations carried on in March, April, and May, 1938, have revealed a small city and a very highly developed system of furnaces for refining copper and iron. Rooms without roofs had been built with flues in the walls which provided a fierce draft. The ore, already "roasted," perhaps at Mrashrash a short distance away to the northwest where Professor Glueck had previously discovered smelting sites, was placed in retorts around which charcoal was packed, and the heat was so intense that the walls at certain levels were burned red as if they consisted of furnace baked bricks; at other levels they were turned yellowish-green by the sulphurous gases from the melting ore.

The site evidently was chosen because the north wind blows very regularly, often very fiercely, down the Wadi 'Arabah, and thus, without recourse to bellows, furnished the strong draft necessary. Wood could be secured from the palm trees of the neighborhood and from the forests of the mountains of Edom. The ore came from the numerous mines which Professor Glueck has already discovered in the wadi. The copper tools and ornaments manufactured could be shipped on Solomon's ships which were pulled up on the sandy beach not far away. That the site was Ezion-Geber is not to be regarded as definitely proved, but is at least very probable. Where Elath was is not yet ascertained. The site called Aila does not reveal pottery of the proper date.

Petra, the "rose-red city half as old as time," to use the well-worn phrase of Dean Burgon, comes to attention in this account for two reasons. First, an expedition of Sir Flinders Petrie's British School of Archaeology in Egypt, under the competent direction of Miss A. M. Murray, partially excavated two small caves with chambers and a tomb there in March, 1937. The amount of débris found in the caves and the uncertain character of some of the roofs made complete clearance impossible. It appeared, however, that more rooms

might be found behind if further clearance were made. By the entrance to the tomb was an altar formed by a mass of rock 18 feet long, 5 feet wide, and from 1 to 3 feet high. These structures seemed to belong to a street of small dwellings.

In the second place, the results of the years of exploration and excavation at Petra by Mr. and Mrs. George Horsfield have begun to appear in superbly illustrated form in the *Quarterly* of the Department of Antiquities of Palestine. It is the more welcome because, aside from the volume of Major Kennedy, all the best accounts of this astonishing site are in German.

#### THE BYZANTINE PERIOD

In the nature of things many discoveries of Byzantine materials are being constantly made. Since that was one of the most prosperous periods Palestine ever knew, the remains are very considerable. Since it was the last period of prosperity and extensive building, the remains are near the surface and in most cases very little débris has accumulated above them. Since many large churches were built during that time, the remains are not easily hidden.

During the past two years Fathers R. de Vaux and R. Savignac of the Dominican École Biblique in Jerusalem uncovered and recorded the remains of a seventh-century Byzantine church at Ma'in, five miles southwest of Madeba. Its especial interest lies in two features. First, its floor mosaic preserves representations of the churches in a dozen cities of Palestine. Unfortunately another dozen have been destroyed. Second, the date in the preserved portion of the floor, February, 720 A. D., according to the discoverers, marks a restoration of the floor in which all representations of living beings had been destroyed by Moslem iconoclasts during the last years of the Calif Omar II (717-19). Mr. Crowfoot had already concluded that this was the time when the mosaics in the churches at Jerash suffered.

The Custody of the Holy Land (Franciscan), under the direction of Father Sylvester Saller, O.F.M., has continued its excavations on Ras es-Siyagh, the traditional Mount Nebo. The Byzantine church complex was entirely cleared and several other buildings, some of them quite large, all of them well built, were uncovered on the slopes of the mountain. Numerous fragments of carvings and inscriptions came to light. Especially noteworthy were a marble bowl and a large white altar slab. Christian occupation of the site evidently extended from the middle of the Roman until far into the Arab period.

The Custody of the Holy Land has also investigated other church buildings in the neighborhood, especially at Khirbet Mukhaiyyat, which is situated halfway between Madeba and Nebo. A church of Saint Lot and Saint Procopius was already known. Later, a church built by the priest John came to light during building operations by the Arabs. Patient cleaning discovered a mosaic floor with inscriptions and various figures of men and animals. In the church of Saint George were found similar scenes and six new inscriptions. Although no dates by any known era were found, it is hoped that the history of the site may be worked out by the indications and a comparison of the various names in the dozen inscriptions from the three churches.

The Palestine Exploration Fund and the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem under Mr. P. L. O. Guy have undertaken a revision of the archaeological survey of Palestine made sixty years ago by Lieutenants Conder and Kitchener. The time is ripe and the scientific tools are ready for such a survey. It should stimulate further excavation by revealing the extent of the archaeological treasures still untouched in Palestine.

## Not as Beating the Air

OSWALD W. S. MCCALL

**M**IGHT there not be less vagueness concerning what precisely we are driving at and concerning what are the proper materials to drive with in our church schools? We can more or less afford to wait until experience consolidates our judgment about methods, but methods new or old must only and always be servants of some aim, and the aim's the thing. It anyhow must not wait or become obscured. Yet is not this just what has happened? And if some observant teacher retorts that too many pulpits and hosts of church members seem to be similarly in the dark concerning what precisely is the object and purpose of church life the case is only so much the sadder.

I am convinced we are due for a clarifying here. Though perhaps only the Lord knows why, Johnny will be in his class again next Sunday. But what specifically is being done for Johnny and why should he come? Not having had it particularly in mind lately, the teacher may be at a loss to say exactly what is supposed to be achieved with the lad, and quite as likely Johnny is also confused about it if he thinks of it at all. It doesn't matter what the books say, or what may be brought out in staff or other discussion, if teachers who prepare to meet their classes are not themselves clearly conscious of what the goal is, it is certainly not likely to be attained.

This is an importunate world. So many real tasks are crying for helpers that one has a right to demand *why* he should become the teacher of a church school class. If the objective of the average teacher could be put into shape would it encourage, or would it, on the contrary, check the co-operation of a man interested in being useful?

Many excellent things are being done for children in the church schools of the country. Children are being taught to love one another, to speak the truth, to be good neighbors, to be sociable and cheerful, to keep their tempers, to be temperate—all very considerable values. These admirable things are being taught in the public schools also. They belong to the common body of personal and social ethics. We find no fault with them. They would still be taught if there were no church schools. Virtue did not begin with the Church. "Brave men were living before Agamemnon."

Yet there are many who seem to think that to instruct in these things is the full and proper work of a church school. To be sure, a church school's work would not be properly done if these things were not included. Nevertheless—"Never was a purer, nobler Christian than my father, honest, kind, even if he never did think much of religion." Every honest and kind person is a Christian then! Quite a prevalent idea.

No, of course. And a church school as an ethical society, or as a Sunday edition of the public school's character building function, is hardly enough. Most teachers will see this at once and will hasten to mention religion. We must add religion.

This is not so satisfactory as it seems. If there is any one word most characterless in the language and one more filled with what Mr. Anthony Eden might call "insipidated gloom," it is this familiar friend *religion*. Without digressing into the mournful wilderness of its amazing uses let me venture the suspicion that there are still left in the world some to whom religion as the objective of a church school is no more enough than ethics is enough. The fact is that many great and venerable terms seem to be in use whose meanings have become denatured—whether by an evil and adulterous generation, God knoweth!—so that they are no longer either venerable or great.

In Christian circles *religion* once was a very considerable word. The religion of Jesus Christ our Lord once was declared as our greatest human splendor and the thing of brightest promise known to man. The brains of the centuries wrestled with its enormous meanings and the art of the centuries was inspired by it. Certainly those who had the teaching of it were sure of their message, were moved by its urgency, and for them life didn't begin even at forty if this were missed. As to the admirable ethics taught in our church schools and elsewhere, they would have said that the great insight of Jesus stressed insistently that moral instruction never terminated moral impotence and that He showed through the Spirit the vital way to moral power.

It is not satisfactory to be told in general that church schools should teach *religion*. There are religions and religions. One would think from much one hears that Christianity's distinction lay in its noble moral ideals. Noble ideals would not even have been news. Christianity was news and "good news." This was because to its ideals it added *implementation*.

Higher significances have a sorry way of getting lost in routines, programs and techniques, but the modern world grows less and less patient of



trees that cumber the ground with enormous wood and small fruit. The elaborate expense and effort of our church machinery, whether in relation to children or to adults, have only one solitary justification—that it is doing something in the world which is not only indispensable but is not being done by anything else. Too much is cracking the foundations of civilization for us to beg leave to survive if only as a decoration. We shall not survive even as a genial extra, not in such times. In an emergency of lifeboats dolls are not rescued from the ship. In a desert cry for water perfumes are no substitute. What have we that the world must have, without which lifeboats will save no life and all water prove a mirage?

No reply of significance is likely to be forthcoming until we have had a revival of theology. The decay of theology was inevitable, I suppose, but it has left us with words—such as God, Christ, religion, Christianity, sin (though I'm not entirely sure that sin is left)—from which has departed coherence. A new statement of Christian positions is due. As in Alexandria long ago, when Christianity, as yet unformed in thought though incandescent in spirit, had to find and state where it stood in order to defend its ground against the philosophies alien to itself in that Roman world, so in this modern world must some such similar work be done if Christianity is to endure. Once more, as then, the world is aswarm with new ideas and cults, unprecedented sciences and the philosophies born of them. That which cannot self-understandingly declare what it is not cannot defend itself. Christianity can save itself from being diluted out of existence, and can recover positiveness and thrust, only as it discovers and affirms clearly its own resistances, agreements and peculiarities amidst it all. Reversion to Latinized Christianity, known among us as fundamentalism, will not do. Christianity must be rethought in the light of all that has been learned. On a sounder ground than anything possible to fundamentalism, and with intellectual respectability recovered, that which is Christianity must be set in distinction from that which is alien to it. The sciences all have their doctrines, without which they could claim no man's deference. "A religion without theology is a religion without brains."

Toward such an end conversations in theology might well form a necessary part of the church school's monthly staff meeting, with the pastor, or his equivalent, present for informal and clarifying discussions. Nothing will reach the children that teachers are unfurnished to give.

What then in all this, in all the year's rhythm of church school activities, in all the activities of the Church for that matter, what is it we are trying to do?

We may state our aim as *the making of people into citizens of the kingdom of God*. But again one has to halt. That Kingdom is the one in which God rules and issues the law—not the State, nor business, nor mammon, nor society. This God, whose law and spirit and will are to be found, consulted, and lived by, is not just one of the gods. He is “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” specific in His character, the One of whom Jesus was “the express image.” Jesus’ kingdom of God was the Kingdom of that sort of God. It is a Kingdom in which frustrated man’s three fatal maladjustments are superseded by the life-giving conditions of right relations with God, with one’s neighbor, and with one’s own self. Here are all the law and the prophets and the fulfillment of man’s dream of his blessedness.

If our aim is the making of citizens of this Kingdom let it now be observed that the aim is never likely to be achieved, except perhaps in a superficial and unstable manner, unless we keep in mind, and also in our methods, two considerations which, I observe, the State is wise enough to concentrate upon in training aliens into citizens of this nation. I refer to the State’s instruction of the prospective citizen in a certain kind of *knowledge* and of its training in him of a certain kind of *sentiment*. The first initiates him into the beginnings of the country, its struggles for its ideals, the Constitution and the institutions by which it has sought to protect and express them. In it all he is shown what is the American spirit and wherein it is distinctive. The second calls upon him to revere and honor, with suitable outward and visible accompaniments, this country, saluting its flag, repeating the oath of allegiance, rising for the National Anthem, and so forth. Citizenship is a thing of loyalties. Its privileges are great but they all presuppose those loyalties, which cover the keeping of laws, co-operation and self-subordination in advancing the country’s interests, defense of the country even unto death. Such loyalties are not to be lightly achieved and are likely to stand safely only upon such knowledge and such sentiment as the State continually seeks to induce.

The suggestive parallel to our work is obvious. I wish I could feel that we had always been as wise. The loyalties demanded of citizens of the kingdom of God to its Lord, its spirit, its laws, also need a certain kind of knowledge to give them understanding and evaluation. Our religious backgrounds are in the Bible. As our country’s history has a unique and solitary importance to us as Americans, and retains it whatever may be said or admired about other countries’ histories, and as American citizenship could have no conviction or appreciative ardor without some initiation into this background, so it is with

the Scriptures and their bearing upon our Christian life. With parents failing to instruct their children, and themselves ignorant as children about the Bible, it is not easy for me to understand how the church schools anywhere could have conceived it well to let their interest grow tepid in imparting knowledge of our source literature. The result is pitiful enough. Blown about by every wind of doctrine, at the mercy of every new cult, however mad, the people are become like swirled leaves that cannot but be blown, having lost hold upon the tree. Perhaps one reason why it has become necessary to plead for a restoration of this sort of instruction is because that literature has become strange and remote. It is so much more robust than the Christianized sentimentalisms prevalent. It has bones. But how much the more greatly do we need, then, the corrective of it!

Let the analogy speak. The nation has a basic source literature, certain facts of history, in which the rationale, genius, character and spirit of the United States are found. No one supposes that a good citizen of this nation will be made by simply knowing these facts, or that there are not many who remain enemies though they know them all. Nor does one suppose it to be either necessary or desirable that that source material should be treated as sacrosanct from criticism or as unblemished by error. Furthermore, we shall agree that there are American citizens who use American history narrowly and bigotedly, who use it to feed an exclusive nationalism and to stultify thought, who will settle a great issue with a quoted text and so impede progress. With all this, the fact is not altered that knowledge of this history seems to be a necessary element in the making of good American citizens—if such citizenship is to exhibit loyalties that are discriminative and perceiving, and likely to survive in a time of strain, or in a time of temptation to abandon those loyalties for others. Let all this be an analogy of a higher realm.

Lincoln's Gettysburg Address is still *memorized* by children, and many another fact and passage of our national story, but we must be careful, it seems, how we ask children to memorize from the Bible. Knowledge of our country's institutions, of the Constitution, representative government, the judiciary is taught our children, interesting or not, but knowledge of the coming and the function of the Church, of its sacraments, the ministry, the sacred offices held by the laity is not necessary.

However, knowledge is only part of the process. The State knows it if we do not. By every means, therefore, the State would cultivate patriotic *sentiment*, not merely as already indicated, but by celebration of the country's

fathers and heroes, of their deeds and words, of the nation's ideals and of her sacrifices for them, of the heritage, too, in "her purple mountain majesties above the fruited plain." By special days, by poetry, oratory, and song the arousal of sentiment goes on. Nevertheless, without *knowledge* to enlighten and justify such sentiment, it only becomes meaningless at best and irritating at worst.

The training of Christian sentiment is a fine art and it should be the art of every minister and teacher. All those reverences and rituals that go with worship, that respect for the names of God and of Jesus, for the Cross, the Bible, the communion table, the church building, the suitable attitude at prayer, are means of training Christian sentiment. Hymns celebrate the ideals, the joys, the duties, the heroes, the aims of the Kingdom. In sentiment lies the emotional power man needs for moral and spiritual achievement.

But nothing is more lamentable than the meaninglessness of these ways and manners of religion, to those who have lacked instruction. Such ways all presuppose knowledge. There has arisen an age for whom the hymns that once moved multitudes, to quote an example, fall flat, their rich allusions not understood. Generations there have been which would have stared with contempt at the flimsiness of many of our chosen songs of religion. Yet if there is to be shallow knowledge there will have to be hymns commensurate with the knowledge. As well try to make head or tail of Milton's works without knowledge of the classics as expect a generation uninstructed in our Christian Scriptures to feel the grand strength of some of our older hymns. Instead we may as well content ourselves to expect the impatient revolt, as from "stuffiness" and "unreality," by which many today illustrate their incapacity to see.

Teachers, whether of children, of youth, or of adults need not feel that they are being asked to depart from the practicalities of our religion in all this, from what are sometimes called the "applications" of Christian principles to common life and affairs, from instruction in how to behave in this situation and in that. Not at all. They are being urged to invigorate the nerves and sinews of these "practicalities," which, with all our talk of them, are only half alive among us, and without which invigoration there can be nothing practical achieved. Undeniably, the *development* of citizens in intelligent discharge of their citizenship is also a necessary undertaking, though it would seem to be rather essential to make sure of a citizen's loyalties ere hoping to get far along with the proper application and expression of them.

As a matter of fact, by far the major proportion of Jesus' message seems to have been occupied with illustrating how His principles work. Almost the whole of the Sermon on the Mount is a case in point. Contrary to frequent opinion, here is no more a picture of a Christian than a description of a person's manners would be a description of the man. Providing he is a certain sort of man, with a certain kind of character, mind, and spirit this is how he may be expected to behave; that is all. Not by observing all the wisdom of the Sermon on the Mount may one become a Christian. That would only be the legalism of a Saul of Tarsus in another form, and from that Paul exulted to be free. We lose the genius of the Christian message, the thing that makes it different and life-giving, when we fail in discrimination here. An impersonator is clever in acquiring tricks and gestures, but these do not make him the character he impersonates. This sort of thing, nevertheless, this acquirement of certain outward styles, passing among us as Christian, has become a very general, a very accredited, and alas, too often a very shallow achievement; but, not by any New Testament understanding, can it be designated Christian.

Jesus was interested in maxims, manners, "applications," but always only secondarily. Of course, He will illustrate by the Good Samaritan how the main thing works when you're actually on the road, but He knows well that a Samaritan can do all that and yet be far from good. Primary in all His thought Jesus placed a man's inner and fundamental relationship to God, to his fellow men and to his (the man's) own self—these loyalties of the Kingdom—and only as behavior grew out of these was there life in it. Applied perfume was not His conception of morality, a pleasantness sprayed on to fulfill the vogue. He would "smell it on the flower." What had no roots would have no future. By a very new birth, profound as the nature of him, a man must make sure of the creative roots of goodness in himself.

More recognition of this is all one pleads for. By all means let wisdom and experience guide citizens of the Kingdom into a proper sense of how their Christian loyalties may be expected to work. Let the whole range of human affairs be insisted upon as the place where Christian principles must act, but let there be more consciousness among us of the secondary value of this. Unless we move back to primary places, notable achievement in even these secondary places is bound to be denied us.

It is therefore fruitful to recall that the Decalogue came to be known not as the Ten Maxims but the Ten Commandments. Somewhere in this



difference lies an account of much modern trouble. Where the moral authority of "shall" degenerates into the tentative "may," duty loses its sceptre and speaks no more from any throne, and into all the realm of moral sensibility, moral elevation, and of course, moral seriousness and courage, there quickly sets in a decay. Behind the Commandment is the Commander. For us Christians, anyhow, that is accepted. Unless it be forever inculcated, and obedient loyalty to Him forever enjoined, the rest is much as one pleases, so long as he can "get away with it." Admit that times and seasons affect elements in all the codes, rendering some obsolete, and that lengthening experience continually enriches our knowledge of what is right for man, but woe's the day when a people carry this on to the presumption that the moral sense also gets out of date. We shall see the law as we shall see it, but the Christian message here is that behind the law, whenever and however it is seen, stands Authority. Loss of this immense sense of God's being always in the background, justice and truth the pillars of His throne, has worked havoc with our morals and with our responsible readiness to stake all on doing what is *right*. And as I say, it is in this primary realm, where truth can grow austere because it is great, that Jesus bade us move.

Neither let any man suspect that in seeking to instruct people, young or old, to move in Jesus' realm we have an easy task ahead. Though we have helpers, pure Christian instruction quickly discovers many adversaries. One fears it must be acknowledged to be simply true that Western civilization languishes, as from a creeping rot, because of insufficient experience of those healths represented by Christianity as it first came out of Galilee, but anyone who thinks that therefore what is most needed will be most welcome is merely not aware of people. As well expect delirium to understand and welcome measures taken for its aid. If illusions of health and wealth seek to thwart the physician, even by violent resistance, one can only say that it is to be looked for in sickness. The delirious man doesn't know what's good for him. The ideals of Jesus are not, and never were, the popular rally centers of the populace. But what then? Have we come to be democratic about truth, also, deciding what is wise by counting noses, and submitting even God to popular vote? "The voice of the people the voice of God." Not, as one has protested, since the day when a certain crowd cried: "Crucify! Crucify!" Yet the rejected stone becomes the head of the corner. It must at last if the entire arch is not to fall. In the long run, in a matter of generations or centuries, when prejudice and self-interest have time to fall away, the people's moral



and spiritual good sense can be entrusted to see the soundness of Jesus; but in the meantime, no, not where he opposes their prejudices and self-interest. The only hope for a day of false gods is that God shall be made known and regarded.

There will be much food for disquieting reflection for anyone sitting down to consider how very false the characteristic gods of our time are, that is, if the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is true. Such an one will be amazed at the truculent revival of national and tribal gods that everywhere are ousting the God of Jesus as effectually as once He dismantled the Pantheon and reduced to silence the ancient inhabitants of Olympus. Are they coming back for their revenge? For Lecky assures us they did not die but only changed their names, often to those of Christian saints, and had their favorite festivals baptized into the Christian faith. "Though apparently defeated and crushed, the old gods still retained, under a new faith, no small part of their influence over the world." Our observer of our world will behold widespread, frank surrender of rights and liberties once purchased by much brave thought and blood. He will regard even the democracies invaded and corrupted by intolerance, nonconformity feared and detested as the plague, public opinion, business, labor, all exercising strange inconsistencies in various assortments of coercion, regimentation, bulldozing and the like. He will see most venerable sanctities, long agreed upon by mankind as the necessary and indispensable ground of all social life and procedure—the inviolability of the pledged word, of laws mutually accepted—suddenly become, like vestal virgins by barbarians ravished to make a cynic's holiday—and devil take the results. Nameless callousness and ferocities in the pursuit of booty have crawled out of their primeval slime to teach our modern humans real down to earth efficiency in the art of getting what they want. At the same time will be noticed a marked deterioration in morals, manners and taste, indelicacies parading righteously under the guise of emancipations, romance fallen to a "fiddling on the strings of sensuality." Also, still at the same time, by what can be no coincidence, church schools will be heard complaining of having fallen on evil days, missionary societies reporting wholesale recession in support for missions, and churchmanship admitting itself to be just one among the many interests.

Obviously something is the matter with our world. These are disturbingly unhealthy symptoms, whatever the explanation. And the explanation is sometimes said to be in the people's loss of moral and religious faith as a

result of the new sciences. The explanation is not to be ignored. There was a decline of faith in the days preceding the Roman collapse. Howbeit, no single influence, so they say, effected the fall of Rome.

In seeking to understand how we have got this way today, we should estimate, if we can, the effects upon ourselves of the past one hundred and fifty years, during which, since the coming of the industrial revolution, we have set up, worshiped, and established gods of a kind that could only damn us at last with just such harvests as we are reaping.

You cannot make wealth and business, and still more business, the chief end of man—our commercial buildings have become “temples,” our undertakers’ buildings “chapels”; you cannot apotheosize worldly success; admire, envy and emulate most the man who best knows how to “get his”; celebrate and revere, not the givers of new gifts to mankind as the nation’s kings, but the men of great possessions, relaxing continually your criticism of the methods by which they win their kingdom providing they truly win it, and then, after one hundred and fifty years of sowing such falseness reap the true. You cannot make vogue and fashion the test of truth and of value, and size, numbers, the measure of achievement, whether numbers of pennies or of church members; you cannot lead every child to believe that this is the way and goal for him in the world, that he will be discredited as a failure unless he dances this tune; you cannot have him so believe through a lifetime, mold his life and thinking by it, commend it, contend for it, and assume it as a very axiom, the truth of which, like the existence of the earth, is not so much to be challenged as to be lived on; you cannot, I say, exalt gods of this kidney through a century and at the same time retain vital faith in Christianity. You cannot retain even an understanding of its meaning, much less of its worth. And if you don’t retain such faith, you won’t be eager about promoting knowledge of it.

From these considerations, the urgent need of Christian instruction to our generation is manifest. Because, however, the need is great, the welcome likely to be given to such instruction is the more doubtful. The exalting of God, right and conscience above the State is a serious heresy; the opposing of Christian ethics to an effete morality, the proclaiming of Christian catholicity and Christian justice for all peoples and classes, of sacramental Christian self-giving in a civilization frankly established on self-getting, of the values of the spirit in place of the prizes of the world, the flesh and the devil—it stands to reason that hospitality to these is not really to be expected in a mental

and moral "set up" so long hostile to them. If we fail to be very interesting is that surprising? Should the Christian message be strongly diluted it may pass. Should it allow itself to be drawn into the service of our chosen gods to reinforce them and add still more respectability to them, it may even be hailed. But then we who are Christian instructors may as well save our strength. With only this to offer to the world, the world does not really need us.

If we are going to do any saving, we had better begin to be saviors.

We may have to consent to become small ere we can begin to be great. We may have to lose our lives that we may save them. We may have to see many teachers and many children forsake us and follow no more with us, see our attendances shrink, our classes attractive only to the more thoughtful. As often in Israel, we may have to be left with a remnant. But if we can make that remnant a vital stock there may be more promise of life in it and of great days to be than in any further elaboration and organization of religious pernicious anemia.

With all this, I would think that gradually the self-commending power of real worth would begin to win allegiances from those unknown but hungry ones who have not bowed the knee to Baal, and that thorough and profoundly significant Christian emphases, greeting those in the church schools, would begin to redeem the repute thereof and draw approval and co-operation from quarters that have been passing us by. Be this as it may, let us "rather be right than be president." And though we cannot hope to make all the world agree with us, at least let us make sure that we become something that no man can despise. We may not always keep the saddle, but we can see to it that no man unhorses us without first having felt the manhood in our lance.

That loyalties of the kingdom of God are not to be trained into anyone, we know. Citizens must themselves supply the determining factors in the will to loyalty. But there can be strong and just influences persuading toward that Kingdom. The time allotted each week is discouragingly brief. Week-day vacation schools report more achieved in their few weeks of concentrated work than in a year's desultory work in church schools. We have all too little time, it is the general complaint. As we have not time to do everything, I cannot see that we have time to spare on the tasks that others are undertaking. The Christian Church has a specific thing to do which no one else is doing, and which will not be done unless she does it. Let methods improve from more to more, but through all let our own work be done.

## Carl Sandburg

### The Laureate of Industrial America

LEWIS H. CHRISMAN

CARL SANDBURG is not a poet of the cloister. No other American poet, with the possible exception of Whitman, has so comprehensively, truthfully and luminously mirrored the life of his generation. The world of Sandburg is not one of stardust, nightingales, magnolias and honey-suckles. Neither is it one of fusty library alcoves. In the largest sense of the term, he is the poet of the open road. He does not build walls, but breaks them down. To read him alertly and sympathetically is to escape narrow boundaries. His poetry reflects and interprets the most significant aspects of our present-day national life. Consequently, there is infinitely more to it than perfumed prettiness and finespun daintiness. It can be described in the words of Whitman as being "stuffed with the stuff that is coarse and stuffed with the stuff that is fine." Sandburg lays his finger accurately on the pulse of modern America. This does not mean that all of the current trends and movements are reflected in his poems. Only once in several generations can we find a writer of whom this can be said. Yet this poet of the Middle West has a sympathetic insight, a broad sweep and a firm grasp of the sacredness of fact. His poetry is a revelation of the most characteristic manifestations of present-day American life and the modern American mind.

A study of his biography enables us to understand why Sandburg is not a purely bookish poet. The son of Swedish immigrants, he was born in Galesburg, Illinois. At thirteen he left school and secured work on a milk wagon. Then for six or seven years he was an itinerant laborer in various parts of the Mississippi Valley. He was a porter in a barber shop, sceneshifter in a cheap theater, truck handler in a brickyard, apprentice in a pottery, dishwasher in Denver and Omaha hotels, and harvest hand in Kansas wheatfields. Louis Untermeyer has perspicaciously said, "These tasks equipped him as no amount of learning could have done to be the laureate of industrial America." But they are only a part of his rich experience. Next came his enlistment in Company C, Sixth Illinois Volunteers, at the outbreak of the Spanish American War. Upon his return from Porto Rico he entered Lombard College in the

town of his nativity. Later he earned his living and enriched his experience in divers ways. He worked for a time as district organizer for the Social-Democratic party of Wisconsin. He was also salesman, advertising manager, pamphleteer and newspaperman. Like Mark Twain, Sandburg was especially fortunate in having a richly varied experience which developed his insight, widened his horizons and gave him first-hand contacts with vivid, colorful life and action.

Although Sandburg's geographical range is by no means restricted, there are still those who persist in thinking of him as the poet of Chicago because it was the poem of that name which first introduced him to the larger public. Without a doubt his most familiar lines are those beginning:

"Hog Butcher for the World,  
Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,  
Player with Railroads and the Nation's Freight Handler;  
Stormy, husky, brawling,  
City of the Big Shoulders. . . ."

A genuine poet of a single city could hardly be provincial in his outlook. Thomas Carlyle, in *Sartor Resartus*, in one of the most mesmeric and unforgettable passages that ever came from his pen, describes Teufelsdröckh in his attic room of the highest house in the city of Weissnichtwo, dreaming of the multitudinous-sided life which was simmering and hidden in the houses and streets below, heaped and huddled together, separated only by a little carpentry and masonry; "crammed in, like salted fish in their barrel—or weltering, shall I say, like an Egyptian pitcher of tamed vipers, each struggling to get its head above the others." *Chicago Poems* suggests to us thoughts not essentially different from these. To leaf through the book and reread the titles, with familiar lines leaping to you from their setting, is to experience the flashing before your vision of a kaleidoscopic view of real life.

What a motley throng comes and goes! Here is "The Shovel Man," with his faded blue overalls, tied in a knot on the scoop of cast iron, and the spatter of yellow dry clay sticking on his left sleeve, "A dago working for a dollar six bits a day." Carlyle is again brought to mind. "Hardly-entreated brother! For us was thy back so bent, for us were thy straight limbs and fingers so deformed; thou wert our Conscript, on whom the lot fell, and fighting our battles wert so marred. Yet toil on, toil on; thou art in thy duty, be out of it who may; thou toilest for the altogether indispensable, for

daily bread." There are the "Muckers" driving the blades of their shovels into the sides of the ditch, digging deeper and deeper for the new gas main. Twenty of them are digging and twenty looking on. Of the onlookers ten pity the workers and ten envy them. Here is another brutal fact. Anna Imroth, factory girl, is dead. Cross the hands; straighten the legs; call for the wagon. Only one fatality. All the rest were lucky in making the jump when the fire broke out. "It is the hand of God and the lack of fire escapes." Down in the subway:

"The worn wayfaring men  
With the hunched and humble shoulders"

laugh as they toil.

But this is not all of the life of the city. The "Bronzes" are in the park. A bronze Grant riding a bronze horse, and the bronze Lincoln standing among the white lines of snow. Garibaldi in a bronze cape and Shakespeare "seated with long legs of bronze." "A Fence" made out of iron bars with steel points is being built around the big stone house on the lake front:

"As a fence, it is a masterpiece, and will shut off the rabble and all vagabonds and hungry men and all wandering children looking for a place to play.

"Passing through the bars and over the steel points will go nothing except Death and the Rain and Tomorrow."

But no fence separates the city from the surrounding prairies. The rural region is by no means uninfluenced by the urban. Neither is the metropolis without its rural elements. For example, Mrs. Gabrielle Giovannitti works ten hours a day picking onions on Jasper's seven-hundred-acre farm, although the pay had been cropped to six cents a box because so many women and girls were answering the ads in the *Daily News*. In "Population Drifts" a man and woman, working in a box factory, feel a wistful glory fluttering faintly in them when the breezes of spring blow across the land. They do not realize that the winds of memory are wafting to them the scent of new-mown hay and that somewhere in their lives is a call to "take hold of life again with tough hands." *Chicago Poems* is technically puzzling. Not all of the poems are rhythmically beautiful. The seeker for sugared conceits and tinkling rhymes will have none of it. It is altogether probable that the author does not succeed in some instances in doing what he set out to accomplish. This, however, is not exceptional. That Homer nodded is a fact of literary history. Byron says that Wordsworth slept. Shakespeare has written some



inferior dramas. Browning has occasionally produced that which is neither prose nor poetry. If the pedantic critic succeeds in picking flaws in a modern poet, this is no particular reason for consigning him to exterior darkness.

Untermeyer's really fine phrase, "the laureate of industrial America," is not sufficiently inclusive to suggest the scope of Sandburg's poetry. He is the poet of the broad rural acres as well as of the city's welter of humanity, of the village as truly as of the metropolis. *Cornhuskers* is his most distinctively Middle Western book and "The Prairie" his most authentic rural poem. Here again the pictures flash upon the canvas: the threshing crews eating beefsteak, the crowds at a Fourth of July picnic listening to a lawyer reading the Declaration of Independence, the farmer, perched on the seat of the big wagon loaded with radishes and drawn by a pair of sleek dapple-grays, the country schoolteacher and the yellow-haired boy on the bobsled. It is in this poem that we find the words:

"I speak of new cities and new people.  
I tell you the past is a bucket of ashes.  
I tell you yesterday is a wind gone down,  
a sun dropped in the west.  
I tell you there is nothing in the world,  
only an ocean of tomorrows,  
a sky of tomorrows."

There is a sense in which Sandburg can be called a geographical poet. Places loom large in all of his books. The little poem entitled "Localities" is typical and illuminating. First he mentions some places which he never saw, like Wagon Wheel, Red Horse Gulch and "the fly-by-night towns of Bull Frog and Skiddo." But he luxuriates in his memories of White Pigeon, with its blacksmith shop, post office and berry-crate factory, and of seeing boys clubbing walnut trees in the yellow and gold woods on the Pecatonica River near Freeport in his native state. In *Good Morning America* one finds such titles as "Kansas Lessons," "Whiffs of the Ohio River at Cincinnati," "Chillicothe," "Three Slants at New York," "Crossing Ohio When Poppies Bloom in Ashtabula," "Santa Fe Sketches" and "New Hampshire Again." In "Landscape Including Three States of the Union" the background is Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, "a meeting place of winds and waters, rocks and ranges," where John Brown came "to fight and be hanged." It is in *The People, Yes*, his most recent volume, that the geographical vista is the widest. Here, for example, he quotes the Quaker poet who wrote of one part of Pennsylvania,

"God might have made a more beautiful region than Chester County—but He never did," and the Oklahoma newspaper woman who rewrote it and reapplied it. The list of geographical names in this book passes the hundred mark and most of them are the bases of passages characterized by social insight and human sympathy.

Although "Band Concert" in *Cornhuskers* is not among Sandburg's greatest poems, it has a genuineness and vitality which make it convincing. Almost twenty years ago an Ohio college professor read it to a cultivated, alert-minded elderly ministerial friend, who was very skeptical in regard to what was then designated as the "new poetry." Although "Band Concert" did not entirely convince him, he said, "Sandburg catches the real spirit in the life of the small town of the Middle West," and as long as he lived he read him, especially for his interpretation of the life which he himself knew and loved. A poem of somewhat similar scope is "The Sins of Kalamazoo." Here again there is little of the lyrical or the elusively beautiful. Kalamazoo is "A spot on the map where the trains hesitate." Smokestacks smoke; grocery stores are open on Saturday night; one can see there the signs of five-and-ten-cent stores; there are churches with steeples like hatpins and hound dogs of bronze on the public square:

"And the children grow up asking each other, 'What can we do to kill time?'

They grow up and go to the railroad station and buy tickets for Texas, Pennsylvania and Alaska.

'Kalamazoo is all right,' they say, 'But I want to see the world.'

And when they have looked the world over they come back saying it is all like Kalamazoo."

In James Bryce's once much-quoted *The American Commonwealth* there was a chapter entitled "The Uniformity of American Life," in which the author stresses the monotony of the American scene, one of the reasons being the similarity of one town to another. This is one of the major ideas in "The Sins of Kalamazoo." As we study the life of one town we "hear America singing." There are hundreds of Middletowns and thousands of Gopher Prairies. The small town of Carl Sandburg is no sequestered "Sweet Auburn," where health and plenty and everything else that is good bless the noble swains and the lovely damsels in an environment uncontaminated by the vices of the wicked world which lies in the dim distance. Neither is it a nest of gossip, ugliness, sordidness, provincialism and hypocrisy, like Sinclair Lewis's Gopher Prairie, or that other bitter dead little town of warped,

disappointed strugglers which Willa Cather pictures in "The Sculptor's Funeral," one of America's great short stories. Sandburg's analysis of small town life is neither bitterly critical nor dishonestly sentimental. It is rather between the two. It is honest without being unkind. It comes about as near to being the exact truth as we can hope to find in print. Naturally, Sandburg does not show all phases of small-town life. This is not to be expected or desired. But as far as he goes, his interpretations of this typical aspect of the American scene are truthful, just and enlightening.

Just as the title, *Chicago Poems*, indicates that the dominant note of the book is the life of the big city on Lake Michigan, and the title, *Corn-huskers*, signifies that its primary emphasis is that of the farms and villages of the "Valley of Democracy," so the caption, *Smoke and Steel*, gives expression to the drama of industrial America. In his gently beautiful but much-parodied "The Bridge," Longfellow tells of standing on the old bridge over the Charles River and thinking of the shadowed days of his own life and the other care-encumbered men who had crossed that same wooden span. As he dreamed:

"And far in the hazy distance  
Of that lovely night in June,  
The blaze of the flaming furnace  
Gleamed redder than the moon."

That is about as near as the poets of *The Flowering of New England* ever came to the blazing furnaces and the seething life around them. But in the title poem of *Smoke and Steel* Sandburg takes us to the very furnace itself. We see the red dome of the ovens and hear the "harr and boom of the blast fires." Billets wriggle and clinkers are dumped. Sparks gleam and crack.

"Spools of fire wind and wind.  
Quadrangles of crimson sputter.  
The lashes of dying maroon let down."

But there is more in such a poem than coruscating fires and chilled, blue, finished steel. It is one more scene in the ever-changing drama of humanity, "Pittsburgh, Youngstown, Gary—they make their steel with men." The steel goes to the ends of the earth. It is used in liners in the sea and skyscrapers on the land. There is "diving steel" and "climbing steel." But it takes men to make steel.

Intense as is the interest which this poet manifests in the backgrounds of the drama of American life, his primary concern is with human beings. And

what a diverse array of humanity we find in his poems. It is at "Blue Island Intersection," where all day six street ends feed people into the center, that he hears the roaring music of humanity. Crowds thrill him, but his most convincing portraits are of individuals. The old Illinois farmer, who goes to his long sleep after years of toil; the girl in the cage fingering dollars all day; Buffalo Bill as he rides by, giving the boys a slanting glance from under his broad-brimmed hat; the washerwoman who belongs to the Salvation Army and sings over her tub of Jesus who will wash all sins away; the old flagman at the crossing, with "clear sea lights in his eyes"; the old-timer on the desert, gray and grizzled with the ever-seeing sun; the professor at the University of Wisconsin refusing a patent on his butterfat milk tester; the farmer mending his fence, making it "hog tight and horse high"; the bricklayer in his overalls and the man who walked out of his home in Chillicothe, Ohio; Chillicothe, Illinois, or Chillicothe, Missouri, lamenting that he had never seen himself live a day—all these come and go before the reader of the poems of this poet of modern America.

"But Sandburg is so brutal." Such a statement is neither profound nor entirely true. The so-called brutality in his poetry which makes it revolting to some readers comes from his human sympathy. He is basically a humanitarian. He burns with a hatred of injustice and cruelty. Man's inhumanity to man causes him to burst forth in fiery indignation. And when he does this he speaks in a language which he who runs can understand. There is the closest possible relation between his humanitarianism and the distinctive, militant social note in his poetry. One of the most scathing indictments of hypocrisy in literature is found in his "Implications." A senator was charged with bribery and his defense was, "I read the Bible and believe it from cover to cover." When a specific charge was made that the corruption money was paid in a Saint Louis hotel the answer of his friends was, "He is faithful to his wife and always kind to his children." In *The People, Yes* there is evidenced again and again a spirit of protest against insincerity, dishonesty and all forms of exploitation of humanity. He quotes approvingly the words uttered by "a Harvard president from a birthmarked anxious face, 'Secret influence is the greatest evil of our time,'" and also a statement from another world-renowned educator who is reported to have said, "And the crookedest crooks in the United States government have been well educated." He wonders whether man can ever leave the wilderness, if he will eventually reach the place where his philosophy will no longer be "dog eat dog."

In his application of a philosophy of social justice he knows how to hammer the truth home to the individual. An example of this is "Horses and Men in the Rain." Here a group of men sit by a hissing steam radiator on a winter's day talking about mail carriers and messenger boys being exposed to the cold winds and the frozen rain. While they talk and write poems of Launcelot, the hero, and Roland, the hero, a roustabout goes by hunched on a coal wagon with icicles frozen on his hat rim and sheets of ice wrapping the lumps of coal. The contrast in this poem brings out the possible insincerity of a maudlin social sympathy which expends itself in vapid words and then passes calmly into the world of make-believe.

The poem, "Questionnaire," is entirely lacking in the lyric lilt or rich coloring of some of Sandburg's distinctive poetry. It consists simply of a few blunt pertinent questions. The first one is, "Have I asked any man to be a liar for my sake?" and the second, "Have I sold ice to the poor in summer and coal to the poor in winter for the sake of daughters who nursed brindle terriers and led with a leash their dogs clothed in plaid wool jackets?" Another one is, "Have I done any good under cover or have I always put it in the show windows and the newspapers?" It is impossible to separate Sandburg's humanitarianism from his social sympathy. And it is just as hard to detach either of them from his indignation. He likes people. In spite of himself he has a feeling of human sympathy for those whom he castigates. Yet he sees the shallow, purblind, dehumanized selfishness of "The Mayor of Gary," in the era of the twelve-hour day and the seven-day week, platinizing in comfort over the ease of the workingmen who, according to his opinions, sat around in comfort in the plants while "machinery does everything." Of course, he characteristically gives the other side of the picture. For instance, he speaks of the workingmen with bunches of specialized muscles "around their shoulder blades, hard as pig iron," who wear leather shoes bearing the marks of fire and cinders and full of little holes made by the running, molten steel.

It would not be inappropriate to speak of him as "the laureate of the machine age." He is not opposed to the presence of the machine. He recognizes that the day of the isolated workmen making things by hand is gone. He does not philosophize or propagandize. He is a writer of poetry rather than sociology. His appeal is not primarily intellectual but emotional. More than forty years ago Caleb T. Winchester wrote: "Literature, therefore, which at once speaks the feelings of the writer and stirs those of the readers, is

necessarily the truest and deepest record of human life." Sandburg most assuredly does speak his own feelings and stir ours. His joy of life and his appreciation of those who live buoyantly and zestfully are contagious. So is his indignation against the all too many revolting cruelties and crass injustices.

We could not imagine anybody who has read twenty of Sandburg's poems needing any information in regard to his attitude toward war. This would be true even if one had never read a line in which the poet mentioned the subject. A man of his social sympathies would inevitably react against wholesale slaughter. It was in the years of the World War that he stepped into the light of public recognition. In *Chicago Poems* there is a section called "War Poems." They are not arguments. They simply communicate the author's feelings. "Buttons" consists merely of three brief stanzas in the center of a page. It takes us back to the days of propaganda, bulletins and seething excitement. The crowd is watching a war map in front of a newspaper office. Red, yellow, blue and black buttons are being pushed across it to designate the positions of the troops. A laughing young man moves both a yellow button and a black one about an inch. This was apparently only an inconsequential gesture. Yet it meant ten thousand men and boys twisting their bodies in the blood-drenched soil of a river's edge. Russell Blankenship has characterized "A. E. F.," which appeared in *Smoke and Steel*, as "one of the strongest indictments ever drawn against war." It is, though, entirely free from any of the hallmarks of traditional propaganda. It contains only eight lines. There is nothing here of brawling denunciation but it is a poem not easy to forget.

Newton Arvin has said, "This son of an immigrant Swede railroad worker, this ex-housepainter, ex-dishwasher, ex-newspaperman has done more than all but two or three other writers of his time to keep somewhat open and unclogged the channels that ought to flow between the life at the base of society and the literary consciousness." This is exactly what Sandburg has done. In his poetry we find life that is genuine and convincing. The student of the history of American literature cannot help being impressed with the fact that there have been times when a great gulf existed between "the life at the base of society and the literary consciousness." Most of the writers of whom Van Wyck Brooks tells us in *The Flowering of New England* had no contact with the life of those at the bottom of the economic and social ladder. In Louis Untermeyer's "Prayer" we read the words:



"Open my eyes to visions girt  
 With beauty and with wonder lit—  
 But let me always see the dirt,  
 And all that spawn and die in it.

"Open my ears to music: let  
 Me thrill with Spring's first flutes and drums—  
 But never let me dare forget  
 The bitter ballad of the slums."

These stanzas express something of the spirit of the modern poetry. American literature has been democratized. It is no longer the plaything of the esthete. It is a voice of the people. The poet of today does not ignore the dirt and that which spawns and dies in it. His ears are not closed to the mournful, tragic music of the slums. He dwells in no palace of art on sunlit mountain from which he looks condescendingly down on the futile struggles of those who hopelessly grope on the plains below.

This democratic note is dominant in the poetry of Sandburg. He is not the poet of any ivory tower but of the everyday world. Such a world has the tang of reality. It is a place of rough democracy. It has in it the famous man who sits bending his head over his plate, "putting soup in his mouth with a spoon." It also contains the Jewish fish seller who dangles herring before prospective customers, "terribly glad to be selling fish, terribly glad that God made fish." And in this crude, rude, dirty world we find Jack, "a swarthy, swaggering son-of-a-gun," the cheer leader who "struts his stuff" and the actor who in explaining a failure to hold his crowd, says, "I never can do anything with them unless I love them." There are even "Galoots fat with too much and galoots lean with too little."

It was a man who in his youth had been thrilled with the cloying voluptuousness and the swinging cadences of Swinburne who said, "But in Sandburg there is a lack of melody and of beauty." Most emphatically neither of these qualities are absent from the poems of this poet of the machine age. It would be difficult to imagine anybody reading him aloud and missing the rhythm of his loose-jointed measures. His art is too opulent to be limited to the harshness, the sordidness and the brutality of life. It is rich in beauty, exhilaration and magic. In *Slabs of the Sunburnt West*, in speaking of Chicago he describes the city by its turquoise lake as a place where

"The living, lighted skyscrapers stand,  
 Spotting the blue dusk with checkers of yellow."

His imagination has produced many delicately colored and cadenced picture poems which are frequently called etchings. Among them is the familiar "Fog," and others are "Monotone," "Evening Waterfall," "Crucible," "Sumach and Birds" and "Sunsets." "Washington Monument at Midnight" is another etching but it is much more. The coal-black trees with the white ghost between suggest eight years of fighting, Valley Forge with tongues wrangling at a man who stood by himself in a snowstorm. And it is in this poem that we find the far-reaching thought

"The republic is a dream.  
Nothing happens unless first a dream."

Another poem of delicately shaded colors is the interestingly named "Nocturne in a Deserted Brickyard." The fact is that Sandburg's poetry is exceptionally rich in color suggestion. *Smoke and Steel* is dedicated to his brother-in-law, Edward J. Steichen, the famous photographer, and the dedication contains the following felicitous and significant words: "Painter of nocturnes and faces, camera engraver of glints and moments, listener to blue evening winds and new yellow roses, dreamer and finder, rider of great mornings in gardens, valleys, battles." Sandburg himself in his own way is something of a painter of nocturnes and "a catcher of glints and moments."

Like all writers who loom above the dead level of mediocrity, Sandburg has a sense of the reality of the spiritual. This does not mean that he is a theologian. Close as is his contact with many of the significant phases of the life of modern America he shows little knowledge of or insight into the current trends of religion. It is well, however, that in this connection we should remember that we are studying a poet rather than a philosopher. The poet's interpretation of life is a matter of the intuitions of his soul rather than of a chain of logic. Sandburg's vision of fundamental truth is not especially clear. Among his favorite words are "mist," "phantoms," "fog," "ashes" and "dust." Arvin speaks of such terms as "emblems of the poet's almost unrelieved uncertainty." They may, though, signify nothing more than other literary devices.

We must not make the mistake, however, of placing Sandburg among the poets who care nothing about the eternal mysteries. His mysticism is fundamental in his outlook upon life. Again and again we catch glimpses of his identification of the self and the other-self. His humanitarian mysticism is revealed in these words of "Prayers of Steel":

"Lay me on an anvil, O God.  
 Beat me and hammer me into a crowbar.  
 Let me pry loose old walls;  
 Let me lift and loosen old foundations.

"Lay me on an anvil, O God.  
 Beat me and hammer me into a steel spike.  
 Drive me into the girders that hold a skyscraper together.  
 Take red-hot rivets and fasten me into the central girders.  
 Let me be the great nail holding a skyscraper  
 through blue nights into white stars."

The thought of the generations of men passing from eternity to eternity appears many times in the poems of this mystic of the machine age. The limited express of fifteen all-steel coaches hurtles across the prairie. It furnishes the inspiration and basis for a poem of four lines, "Limited." Its dominating thought is that of the transiency of man and all his works. In "Cool Tombs," a much better poem artistically, is something of the same idea.

To Sandburg all of this is a succession of unfathomable mysteries. "Where," "What" and "Why" loom large in his grappling with the truths of life. He takes us out upon the uncharted sea of the vast unknown. But as we seek the solution of such mysteries we must go elsewhere for help. He asks questions which he does not attempt to answer. In the prologue to *The People*, Yes we are told that in the book there are echoes from the clamor of the roaring, whirling street crowds and work gangs, along with the interludes of "midnight cool blue and inviolable stars," shining over the phantom-like frames of the skyscrapers. This describes much that we find in Sandburg. But it is not all. To read him is to travel from city to city, from state to state, and to rub elbows with flesh-and-blood human beings. Like every real poet he suggests more than he puts into words. In him we find no withering, devastating pessimism which makes us bitterly contemptuous of our fellow men. In spite of his capacity for indignation at that which deserves the wrath of any man with a soul not shriveled by selfishness and circumscribed narrowness of vision, he is fundamentally an optimist. He believes that man is not only a stumbler but a finder, not merely a questioner but an answerer:

"And across the bitter years and the howling winters  
 The deathless dream will be the stronger,  
 The dream of equity will be won."

## What Is Meant by "Religion"?

R. BIRCH HOYLE

**T**HERE is need for a new Socrates to cross-examine men who use the term "religion." It is a woolly word that means anything, everything, and nothing in particular. In Britain the Archbishop of Canterbury for two years past has been urging a "return to Religion." But what the word means seems to come to little more than a "come to Church and Pray" campaign. Julian Huxley could write a book with the title "Religion Without Revelation." Barthians would say there is no religion at all unless there is Revelation. The press teems with statements that Communism, Nazism, Fascism are all "religions." Leslie Belton, editor of *The Inquirer*, illustrates the existing confusion in his striking book, *Creeeds in Conflict* (J. M. Dent, London). He describes such heterogeneous forms of religion as Fundamentalism, Swedenborgian, Adventism, Mormonism, Spiritualism, Occultism, Theosophy, Spiritual Healing, Buchmanism, Quietism, Buddhism, Islam, Baliism, Parseism, each of which claims to be the one sure way for man to rise into contact with the Power (or Powers) that be which "binds man" to what is above him. No fewer than forty-eight headquarters of "religions" are listed by him, most of which are outside of Christianity.

The books before us, newly published, exhibit the vagueness of the term, "Religion." The Professor of the History of Religions at Gröningen (Germany) has had his colossal work, *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*, translated into English. It runs to 110 chapters, filling nearly 700 pages of small type. To him, religion means Power that comes from an "active Agent in relation to man," whom we call "God." Yet "we must realize that 'God' is frequently an extremely indefinite concept:" "religious experience is concerned with a Somewhat": "this 'Somewhat' is merely a vague 'something,' a Something *Other*" . . . "a highly exceptional and extremely impressive 'Other'" (his italics). We are not much helped when Professor Leeuw tells us that "the sciences can concern themselves only with the activity of man in his relation to God: of the acts of God Himself they can give no account whatever." He devotes 160 pages to this "Power" seen in sacred places, totems, animals, ancestors, the king, supposed discarnate spirits, found in "primitive religions." Another 140 pages treat of the beings experiencing

religion, such as the Sacred Monarch, the Medicine Man and Priest, the Speaker, Preacher, Saints who receive and transmit this power. For 200 pages he takes up the reciprocal actions of these "religious" persons, their practices of worship, consecration, ritual, sacred books, and their internal emotions of conversion, mystical intercourse, obedience. Then he comes to Revelation, which is God's activity toward man. It will be seen from this necessarily brief outline that an enormous mass of material is used, covering all aspects of religion in human life. The publishers say, "The book may be compared to William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*." This is true, so far as material is concerned, but the Phenomenological approach (explained in a closing section) is Kantian, which means that God is a big X—an Unknown Magnitude. And that helps man very little!

Two volumes of *Studies in the Philosophy of Religion* (Macmillan, London) have been compiled from the late Professor Bowman's papers and lectures at Princeton (U. S. A.) and Glasgow. Professor Bowman was a noted power. To him religion has as its root, "a stupendous dualism, a profoundly seated, comprehensive value—judgment. A value-judgment in the light of which all that is known and felt and thought, everything that experience reveals or reflection brings home to conscience, ranges itself on one side of a dividing line or on the other." In a word, *Crisis*: the dividing line viewed as the antithesis between God and the world, good and evil, the sacred and the secular. This religious sense affects man's existence and destiny. He feels he is a living being doomed to die, yet unable to think death is the end of himself and that no life beyond death will be his. He longs for life. As Tennyson put it:

" 'Tis life, not death, for which we pant,  
More life and fuller, that we want."

Only an experience of God, the ever-living, can meet man's craving.

Professor Bowman's line of thought is akin to Berdyaev's, as seen in his new book, *Solitude and Society* (Bles, London). "Existential philosophy" is the theme of the five Meditations which form this cryptic work. Man is more than, in Plato's phrase, "spectator of time and eternity:" he is involved in it as an agent and one affected to the very depths of his being by "the tragedy of existence." Man is the battle-ground where the tussle is between his sense of freedom and the compulsion of necessity; he is conscious of his superiority over nature (Pascal's "thinking reed"), yet hemmed in by forces he cannot

control: as a "person" he is enmeshed in society which ever develops yet tends to efface his personal individuality: he is in time, subject to time's changes, yet he has "intimations of immortality" and of an eternal order. How can this strain be borne? is the problem of religion. The answer is suggested by the theandric nature of man: he belongs to two worlds, the divine and the human, and in Jesus Christ, God-man, this dualism is to be overcome.

On the dual nature of Christ something will be said later when Professor Creed's book is in view.

In this year's Bampton Lectures, by Doctor Guillaume, the theme is *Prophecy and Divination* (Hodder & Stoughton, London). The author (he was joint-editor of Gore's Bible Commentary) is a specialist in Semitic studies. He compares the various methods used by the Arabs of the Desert, the Sumerians, Babylonians, Hebrews, Mohammedans, to find out the Divine Will. Two types of religion or methods of inquiry he deduces: "one mythological, magical and polytheistic; the other, a personal, intuitive realization of God:" this latter "apparently deriving from the deserts of Arabia." A wealth of material is given on the magical, divinatory methods in practice, and the rise of prophetism in Israel, where similar methods were used, such as the Urim and Thummim, the lot, ordeal, and so forth, can only be accounted for on the supposition of divine revelation. In the course of this work we have discussions on telepathy, thought-transference, second-sight and spiritualistic phenomena, and illuminating extracts from medieval Rabbinical and Muslim writers trying to explain the meaning of "inspiration," "being possessed by the Spirit." This leads to a profound study of True and False Prophecy in Israel and an attempt is made to fathom the process of intercourse with God experienced by their great prophets, and even by Balaam. Religion as an experience is thus lucidly described as having as its essence, "consciousness of God," which in Jeremiah's case meant "greater love of truth and hatred of sin." At the end Doctor Guillaume tries to maintain that there was no essential clash between the prophetic order and the priestly—as an Anglo-Catholic, he feels bound to stand up for his priesthood! This is a rich book in every way.

Dr. H. L. Goudge, Divinity Professor at Oxford, also stands up for priesthood in *The Church of England and Reunion* (S. P. C. K., London). He does this by taking over the Old Testament *en bloc*, notwithstanding Paul's Galatians and Hebrews, by the argument that the Church (never defined) is the same in both Testaments. He "lays about him" with a will, castigating his own Church, Protestants and Romanists. He deplores the



individualism of Protestant "sects." He says, "It is the Church and not the individual conscience which is God's chosen witness to the world: and Protestant individualism renders this corporate witness impossible." Village non-conformity, to Doctor Goudge, is a "curse": he thinks it useless to work for a Christian England: his one hope seems to be that we all return to "Mother-Church." The book reveals a frame of mind in Anglicanism that has to be considered if union of Christendom is ever to come about.

A very useful book, edited by Dr. L. Hodgson, reports the proceedings at the Edinburgh Conference last year. As Secretary, Doctor Hodgson has full knowledge of the discussions and debates which were held *in camera*, and now the outside public can see the modifications the Reports underwent in the process of Conference. All objections from the non-Catholic sections are noted; the aim of this authoritative volume being "to act as handmaid of the churches in the preparatory work of clearing away misunderstandings, discussing obstacles to reunion, and issuing reports which are submitted to the churches for their approval." Evidently a long journey will have to be taken yet, and some people die before Reunion is achieved—or at least undergo a thorough change in their mode of thinking that ecclesiastical machinations are synonymous with "religion."

To Christians what Jesus thought of the Church is all-important and final. But the tide of late has turned in the direction that He never founded a Church at all, for He expected the "end of the world." The Methodist Principal at Oxford, Doctor R. Newton Flew, in *Jesus and His Church* has in scholarly, devout, sober study, with use of the latest Form-Criticism of the Gospels, reached the conclusion that He did intend to found a community or Church (call it what you will), and this able study is "turning the tide." We have not space to outline the argument, nor would we if we had space. We urge all Christian leaders and teachers to study this most timely and important contribution to the problem of the conservation and promulgation of religion, as Jesus viewed it.

A prominent feature of recent books is the collecting of past material, compilation, and not enough thinking forward to the next and necessary consequences of thought. In *The Indwelling God* (Oxford University Press), Mr. E. C. Dervich, a tutor in India, collects the material bearing on the problems of Transcendence and Immanence, as given in Indian religions, in Greek philosophy, in the New Testament, in Church history of doctrine and in the modern world. This collection is useful, and his discussion of the problems is

suggestive, for he indicates where difficulties lie in both the Barthian views and the Immanentist views today.

The last book on our list, *The Divinity of Jesus Christ*, is by the Divinity Professor at Cambridge, Doctor J. M. Creed (Cambridge University Press, England). Here we have a survey of the changes of thought concerning the dual personality of Christ, since Kant's time. In the course we have the line Schleiermacher, Hegel, Ritschl, Troeltsch, outlined, very much as Br  nner did it in *The Mediator*. The thinking is compact, concentrated on the problem of revelation, as affected by historical criticism and comparative religion. All this affects our view of Christ's personality. Doctor Creed gives a balanced estimate of the Dialectical Theology as manifest in Br  nner's work. He summarizes the New Testament view of Christ in three points: from Judaism the Church held a "belief in God as creative mind and will behind, as well as within, the world of sense experience:" that Jesus was held to be "in relation . . . to that creative mind and will," and is "apprehended as the revelation of God:" and thirdly, that "Jesus Christ was also the divine agent in the creation of the world." "These," he adds, "are stupendous assertions," and "the Dialectical Theology is recovering by its reassertion of Divine Judgment, a vital factor in New Testament theology." In "religion" then, he argues that "the doctrine of a cosmic Christ" involves "the relationship of man to God in Christ" and includes also "man's relationship to the world." This carries with it "actual consciousness of sin," which "will always afford the surest approach to belief in God, and the chief clue to the Christian confession of the Divinity of Jesus Christ." And so, he adds, "the doctrine of the Divinity of Jesus Christ can only properly be appropriated when it has been viewed in relation to the question of human destiny."

Thus, in this eminently theological work, we see the Christian religion taking the supreme place above the confusions which range about "religions."

## Beyond Tragedy<sup>1</sup>

*Reviewed by* EDWIN LEWIS

REINHOLD NIEBUHR has written another significant book, disturbing enough to the complacent, stimulating to the intellectually inquisitive, and vastly encouraging to those who are concerned for the issues of life as these are set forth in the Christian faith. If he still wants to call himself "An Untamed Cynic," his friends and admirers will have to bear with him in his desire; but they will still insist that in his combination of the profound insight of the Greek tragedian, the moral fervor of the Hebrew prophet, and the audacious faith of the Christian apostle, he is a veritable gift of God to our perplexed time.

Niebuhr's titles are usually self-explaining. That is hardly the case here. One must read the commentary to understand the text. Perhaps Royce and Nietzsche suggested the title. In any event, the "tragedy" about which Niebuhr writes with a poignancy which bespeaks his own deep sincerity is that of the inevitable involution of "good and evil" which is the hallmark of all finite existence. Only the hope—rather let us say conviction—that this tragedy can be and is meant to be transmuted into triumph can save mankind from the starkest pessimism. Not that Niebuhr would counsel patience with the woes of earth because of the certainty of the coming joys of heaven. That sort of relationship of time and eternity, of history and suprahistory, is to him anathema. Pie tomorrow is not the answer to no bread today. But our modern prophet sees with devastating clarity that life is a dangerous business. It is tragic from any angle. What more tragic than the fact that evil is the cost of good, death the cost of life—unless, indeed, it be the fact that there may be evil of which no good comes, death which gives birth to no life! That men are caught in the coils of a cruel nature, or in the still more cruel coils of the various contemporary economic orders—this is tragic enough, but it is but the expression of a tragedy which is deeper still, a tragedy which the most favored sons of earth cannot escape. The carefree butterfly may preach contentment to the writhing toad—which is the evidence of the butterfly's own tragedy! What greater tragedy than the tragedy of not knowing how compact of the tragic life is and must be! The publican at

<sup>1</sup> *Beyond Tragedy*. By Reinhold Niebuhr. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.00.

least knew the truth about himself, and so was by way of moving "beyond tragedy"; but the Pharisee, thanking God that he was "not as other men," was only announcing how much like other men he actually was.

What, then, is the essence of that tragedy about which Niebuhr writes? It is that every man is equally and inevitably involved in sinfulness. The Fall is "myth," yes! but the Fall deals with solemn truth. Express the truth in some other way if you will, but this is the truth that must be expressed. Sinfulness is inseparable from finiteness, which is to say creatureliness and creativity, but the two are not to be equated. Man is a sinner because he is finite, but his sin does not consist in the mere fact of his finiteness. For whereas the finiteness is a matter of nature and therefore of necessity, the sinfulness is a matter of will and therefore of freedom. Whether Niebuhr's dialectic is adequate to establish this distinction will be regarded by many as a question. (Perhaps the distinction never can be *established*, but only *affirmed* because the alternative is intolerable.) But he at least succeeds in driving the distinction into the very center of Christianity, thereby making Christianity not a mere summation of "the highest social values," but a religion of grace and redemption (which is precisely what it is if Scripture means anything at all), involving contrition, repentance, and regeneration on the part of man, and sacrificial self-giving on the part of God.

Niebuhr therefore has a firm hold on Biblical religion and its claim to rest on revelation. Much of the tragedy which he probes so searchingly has to do with man's self-sufficiency—his "hybris." Rationalism solves no problems. It might be the answer to a few questions which lie on the surface of things, but it is impotent in the presence of all ultimates. Man must be a believer before he can attain to the knowledge, to call it that, which lifts him beyond tragedy, but the correlate of such belief, or, better, faith, is revelation. Else is faith the veriest illusion. When, however, the content of revelation is expressed in language, inevitably it is by paradox and myth. What is not so is affirmed because only thus can what is so be suggested! The final truth of existence is impatient of our neatly-turned formulas. The wine is too strong for the bottle. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels." Everywhere Biblical religion employs the paradox and the myth. Unravel the paradox, literalize the myth, and truth vanishes and untruth takes its place. A wooden, unimaginative orthodoxy is as wide of the mark as that equally unimaginative and lifeless rationalism which passed for "modernism," and which robbed Christianity of its power because it so ruthlessly

dipped its wings. Hence the theme of the opening chapter of the book: "As Deceivers, Yet True." The chapter contains in effect the gist of all that follows; for what is Niebuhr's passionate plea for a realistic ethic—and the book makes this plea in characteristic fashion—but a call to bring the whole of our tragic finite sinful existence, individual, social, economic, political, cultural, under the will of that God whom Christianity alone reveals!

A man utterly modern in his outlook and sympathies is Niebuhr. Yet this is the man, ruthless in his analysis, and drastic in his criticism of our time, who stood before college audiences all over this land—these pages being attest—and boldly declared that history, all confused as it seems to be to reason, is yet meaningful, but that what that meaning is is clear only to one who looks beyond history. Christianity alone gives this over-historical point of reference. "It is the thesis of these essays that the Christian view of history passes through the sense of the tragic to a hope and an assurance which is 'beyond tragedy.' The cross, which stands at the center of the Christian world-view, reveals both the seriousness of human sin and the purpose and power of God to overcome it. It reveals man violating the will of God in his highest moral and spiritual achievements (in Roman law and Jewish religion), and God absorbing this evil into Himself in the very moment of its most vivid expression. Christianity's view of history is tragic in so far as it recognizes evil as an inevitable concomitant of even the highest spiritual enterprises. It is beyond tragedy in as far as it does not regard evil as inherent in existence itself, but as finally under the dominion of a good God" (pages x, xi).

It is indeed a rebuke to our pessimism to learn that college audiences would listen to a message so uncompromising as this. When will a cautious Church learn that Christianity is most convincing according as it is most audacious!

## Book Reviews

**Broadcasting and the Public.** By THE DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND EDUCATION OF THE FEDERAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AMERICA. New York: The Abingdon Press. \$1.50.

HERE is a book which forever ought to correct many wrong impressions about radio—this great new means of communication. Dr. Ernest Johnson was the Chairman of the Committee and with a competent staff of helpers under his direction this very informative book has been produced.

As set forth in the very first chapter, the churches of America have a large stake in radio by reason of the extended facilities granted the churches for religious broadcasting. But aside from that angle, the entire social well-being of the world is the vital concern of organized religion. What goes into the millions of homes makes it incumbent upon the Christian Church to maintain an intelligent and active interest in the future development of radio. We live in a democracy and consequently no measures can be taken to restrict the freedom of the individual. People still have the right of choice. On the other hand the Church must remain the conscience of society and as such it has the responsibility of putting the highest possible values within the range of the individual's choice.

The cost of radio programs in the United States is borne largely by commercial advertising. What grade of program gets through to the public puts a peculiar social responsibility upon the shoulders of the industry. How also to make radio function as a distinct educational asset to

the nation; how to disseminate the news of the day without being a propaganda agent; how to keep the matter of politics free from abuse; all these and many other important problems of broadcasting confront thoughtful citizens today.

The query has often been raised, "How did radio become the giant means of communication today?" Something of a sinister nature arises in the minds of many as they contemplate this great corporation. A chapter is devoted to this aspect, tracing the development of broadcasting from the early days of wireless telegraphy down to the present day, and presenting in an honest fashion some of the former abuses of the industry, the various Federal regulations, and the organization of the Radio Commission and its successor, the Federal Communications Commission. Likewise, a chapter is given to the consideration of the control of broadcasting in other countries. An illuminating chapter is the one on "Advertising," in which the matter of liquor advertising is discussed. Every right thinking citizen is naturally concerned about subjecting children to lengthy recitals of the virtue of gin and whisky. The conclusion of the editors of this book is: "The avalanche of liquor advertising, which has been greatly feared, has not materialized."

The subject of "Religious Broadcasting" comes in for generous treatment, and since the report is addressed primarily to the membership of the Protestant churches, questions which have frequently arisen in the minds of many, are asked and answered. How much time is devoted to religious broadcasting in the United States? Who pays for it? Are the programs arranged by the stations or



networks, or is this responsibility turned over to some individual or organization? Are the religious addresses censored, and more than that, is the preacher restricted in his utterances? As to the last question, it has been charged by editorials in religious magazines that little freedom is granted the speaker. As this review is being written I feel inclined to enter a personal testimony to the effect that in the nine years it has been my privilege to broadcast for the National Broadcasting Company under the auspices of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, neither the Federal Council nor the National Broadcasting Company has ever interfered with the content of my manuscript. In all things the National Broadcasting Company has been most cooperative. And what has been true in my case, must be true in that of my colleagues. What the broadcasting companies are mainly concerned about is, that religion be presented as a Way of Life rather than as controversial and sectarian.

One feels after reading this book that he has gotten a true picture of broadcasting. It recognizes that there is much room for improvement—particularly when one considers that television is in the offing. As the editors conclude: "If we have seen our way to recommend no drastic change in the system of control, this is because we put our confidence in voluntary group action on a local and national scale, to make high standards operative in the industry." Radio broadcasting needs little criticism, but much of enlightened moral judgment. We are thankful for this most excellent report. It is all the more timely in that broadcasting is to receive Congressional attention in the coming session.

FREDERICK K. STAMM.

Clinton Avenue Community Church,  
Brooklyn, N. Y.

### A Guide to Understanding the Bible.

By HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK. New York: Harper & Brothers. \$3.00.

THE title of this volume stirs expectation, for there is nothing more to be desired than a guide in the matter of Bible reading. "Understandest thou what thou readest?" is still a very pertinent question, and no less frequent is the answer, "How can I, except some man should guide me?" There is assuredly a large scope and ample welcome for anyone who will undertake to interpret competently. It matters little that the Bible should be the best seller among books; it matters much that it should be read with understanding.

Doctor Fosdick needs no introduction, for his books are in all our libraries, and his illustrations are in all our sermons. Here he has essayed something more ambitious and has sought to clarify the sacred volume by setting forth several of its religious ideas in their origin and development and permanent significance. This method is undoubtedly exposed to certain objections of which the author takes note in his preface. Many will feel that there is over-simplification here and that the idea of natural evolution plays too large a part in the scheme; some such feeling will come to many who nevertheless believe in progressive revelation. The path of that revelation was not quite so smooth and direct. The author, however, has weighed the difficulties and laid his account with them; he has undertaken the enterprise and he has succeeded in a difficult task. He deals with the ideas of God, man, immortality, right and wrong, suffering, and fellowship with God, and sets them forth in their genesis and historical development.

The writer moves with a sure tread through the manifold literature, has a firm grasp of all the problems involved, and a

thorough acquaintance with the results of critical scholarship. The book is written in a clear, lucid style and though it has a background of technical scholarship, this is not intruded. The whole discussion is carried through in such fashion as cannot fail to illumine Scripture and provide, as the author intends, a guide to understanding the Bible. The book will find a wide welcome and will do much to edify many of God's people.

JOHN PATERSON.

Drew University.

**The Nature of Religion.** By EDWARD D. MOORE. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.50.

THIS book will repay careful reading. Many values are hidden away between its covers, so many that the reviewer has space for only a fragment here and there.

Two emphases and interpretations have special significance for our time:

First, the place of intuition as a hint of undiscovered truth and a stimulus to its pursuit in every sphere of life. "Those who habitually live the grand life of rationality do well to remember that there are some things which are, initially at all events, mediated to us in the intuitive manner and no other." And again: "To think that we never know anything except through intellectual formulation might be called the deliberate provincialism of the intellect. . . . We are often entirely convinced of things for which we spend the rest of our lives seeking the evidence." And yet again: "To trust one's intuition, and, incidentally, thereby to develop one's intuitional faculty, to balance this with rationality so far as this is in any way possible, and yet to persevere in face of that which is not yet rationalized—this is what is necessary." There is here, you see, no disparagement of the intellect. The book is one long demon-

stration of and argument for the use of intelligence in religion. But there is an insistence upon the validity of the life of intuition which this generation would do well to heed. The relation of intuition to religious faith and to the possibility of revelation is interestingly and helpfully discussed.

Second, the relation of Jesus to God. Doctor Moore lays his discerning finger upon one major difficulty in the attempt to appraise the Godlikeness of Jesus. It is that men have so often conceived God in terms of everything that man is not—omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, the Absolute, the Universal, the Ground and Substance of all, the First Cause—and then have tried to say "that once in history one man illustrated all of that," and "have not endeavored to bring together the historical magnitude which Jesus of Nazareth unquestionably was with the God who is given in our own inner experience." Having thus isolated the error which afflicts many in our own time, both those who seek to preserve the transcendence of God and those who cling to the historical Jesus, the author moves on to positive affirmations that are as satisfying as they are thrilling. "We think of Jesus as the one among men in whom God, as the secret of character and power, as the soul of life, lived in a fullness in which He does not live in us, and in which we may be ready to believe that He has lived in none other. We think of Him as one who also has called us in God, or, if you choose, through whom God calls us, to know for ourselves, as best we can, the kind of life which He has lived. . . . We think of Him as one who, without stepping for one instant outside the loved, the familiar, touching, glorious relations of the normal human life, yet incarnated God." Further quotation cannot be made but at least you will know what is in store for you, if you will follow this

man's leadership, when I tell you that he declares that in all theologies the chapter on God should come *after* the chapter on Christ in whom we find what we most need to know about God, and that Jesus of Nazareth is the farthest reach we have into the mystery of the transcendent God!

There are chapters on Worship and Organization and Life, on Immortality and the Supernatural, on the Realization of the True, the Beautiful, the Good, which are altogether worthy of their themes and of the author who here has given us the fruit of long years of meditation and teaching and living.

ALBERT EDWARD DAY.

First Church,  
Pasadena, California.

**Origins of the Gospels.** By FLOYD V. FILSON. New York: The Abingdon Press. \$2.00.

PROFESSOR FILSON has written with a view to the large body of ministers who are in sympathy with the modern interpretation of the Bible but have no means of acquainting themselves with the later critical development. His book, therefore, is no mere popular summary. While he avoids minute discussion he assumes a scholarly interest on the part of his readers. He feels himself free to deal with problems which are of first-rate importance although they may signify little to the general public. After a short chapter explaining the critical attitude to the Gospels he deals at some length with the modern investigation of the text. On this complicated subject he writes with remarkable lucidity, and the chapter which might easily have been the dulllest is perhaps the most interesting in the book. It is particularly valuable for its description and appraisal of the manuscripts which have come to light in the last few years, and

have not yet had time to be included in the textual hand-books. Passing to the Gospels themselves Professor Filson devotes a chapter to Form-Criticism. He explains the nature of this new method, and reviews the work of its chief exponents in Germany, England and America. His own attitude is sympathetic, but he frankly admits the limitations of the method and the flimsiness of many of the conclusions which have been based on it. The larger half of the book is occupied with a study of the Synoptic Problem and of the four Gospels taken individually. So much has been written on these subjects that there is little room for anything that is definitely new. Professor Filson contents himself with tracing the history of the inquiry, and examining the results obtained by outstanding scholars. His judgments are invariably sound and impartial, and he never tries to delude his readers into a belief that any of the crucial issues has yet been finally settled. He gives serious attention to the work of Bussmann and Otto, who would throw back into the melting-pot some of the results which have been accepted as fully assured. The chapter on the fourth Gospel is especially valuable, and should be read by everyone who wishes to know the present attitude of critical opinion on this most difficult of the New Testament writings. There is little to criticize in Professor Filson's book, for he has done a most useful piece of work in exactly the right way. He is always clear and interesting. He writes out of an abundant learning, which makes itself felt on every page although it is never obtruded. It is urgently necessary that modern preaching should keep itself in line with the latest knowledge of the New Testament, and a book of this kind is just what is wanted for this end.

ERNEST F. SCOTT.

Amherst, Mass.

**Interpretative Statistical Survey of the World Mission of the Christian Church.** Edited by JOSEPH I. PARKER. New York: International Missionary Council. \$5.00.

THE lengthy name of this volume gives a fair indication of the amount of material crowded into its three hundred and twenty-three large pages. But neither the long name nor the amount of material gives adequate preview of the significance of the survey itself.

Gathered and collated as basic material for the meeting of the International Missionary Conference near Madras, India, to be convened on December 13, 1938, these statistics are fundamental for any study of modern Christian missions.

This survey differs from any other seen by the reviewer in that the organizing factor around which the figures are clustered is the so-called "younger church." Other collections of statistics have been primarily interested in the sending organizations—the home-base churches and the boards or societies fostering the foreign mission. The emerging young church seemed to interest the statisticians only as evidences that indicated the sending groups were doing effective work.

Mr. Parker and his associates start this volume of facts by this heading, "The Church on the Field." From this point they analyze the Church and its activities, dealing successively with its finances, educational work, medical and philanthropic activities, and so on. It studies, in addition, agencies that are not distinctively church organizations, such as the Salvation Army, Bible Societies, and similar groups.

The most striking single fact among all the statistics is the inclusion of data concerning the foreign missionary activity of the Roman Catholic Church. The

figures were given to Mr. Parker by the responsible church officials.

An invaluable portion of this volume is that section given over to interpretative articles, seventy-four pages in all. These are by outstanding authorities, as the following names, selected at random, will show—Latourette, Fahs, Weigle, McLeish and Kraemer. Let it be noted, also, that two articles were written by distinguished Christians from the "younger church," President Francis C. M. Wei of Hwa Chung College, China, and Professor L. George Paik of Chosen Christian College, Korea.

Each reviewer of this volume will doubtless find features of special interest along the lines of his own personal likes or dislikes. To me there were two particularly arresting sections; one written by Luther Weigle, in which the trends of theological education in mission fields are clearly outlined and interpreted, and one by Alexander McLeish on "Unoccupied Fields." This latter chapter is hopefully commended to the attention of the many uninformed Americans who think "the world is quite well evangelized." Mr. McLeish points out seventeen geographical areas with a population of fifty-nine million among whom there are to be found no missionaries and no baptized Christians, in addition to the large sections of so-called occupied fields, where millions of people are quite beyond the boundaries of organized Christian effort.

The volume is wholeheartedly commended. It probably will produce in most readers a wholesome humility as they gain a new, vivid idea of the tremendous work being done by denominations other than their own, and an even greater humility in the realization of the sweep and activity of the Church in the lands of our foreign missionary effort.

FRANK T. CARTWRIGHT.  
New York City.

**Revelation and Response.** By EDGAR P. DICKIE. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.50.

BRITISH scholarship is generally recognized for its soundness and thoroughness. No book in recent years has illustrated this better than does this volume by the Professor of Divinity, Saint Mary's College, of the University of Saint Andrews. Doctor Dickie is conversant with the thought movements and significant thinkers of our day, and in this book the reader will find a careful appraisal of them. In addition to his fine scholarship, the author has a very readable style.

The problem which receives major consideration is indicated by the title, *Revelation and Response*. Is religious truth the result of man's reasoning powers, or is it wholly given by God through revelation? Barthians insist that it is a matter of revelation, coming through the Word of God; modern liberal thinkers are inclined to minimize this element. Dickie's position is stated most clearly on page 253, where he says that "revelation and response go hand in hand. Every right response is the vestibule of new revelation. In Jesus we see the perfect response, and, because of that, also the perfect revelation." In other words, he is attempting to preserve a balance between these two factors, avoiding the exaggeration of either of the extreme positions.

Nowhere does Dickie depreciate man's reason, though he does show its limitations. Reason validates conviction, though "in spiritual matters certitude belongs not to reason but to love." It, moreover, includes an element akin to personal trust. From this it follows that "only the good man understands the goodness of God." Faith is to be distinguished from reason, but true faith is reasonable.

The philosophical, psychological and sociological treatments of religion are all

examined, but the author never loses sight of the distinctive features of the Christian religion. The kind of revelation which is advocated is always that found in Jesus Christ. This is most clearly seen in the last two chapters which deal with the "Finality of the Christian Gospel," where he shows the "limitations of syncretism" and the way in which we are to conceive that "Jesus is Lord." "The finality of Jesus for religion is summed up in the confession of the early Christian Church, 'Jesus is Lord.' These words imply (1) *Illumination*. In Him we have light on the problems of time and eternity, and of good and evil. Christianity refuses to deny the reality of the temporal, and it insists on the centrality of the moral struggle. (2) *Authority*. Commands are laid on us which are bound up with our eternal destiny. Obedience is the condition of further illumination. Christ is the Judge of all mankind. (3) *Salvation*. Through Him there is deliverance from that which prevents us gaining the illumination which He brings, and from that which stands in the way of our obedience. (4) *Security*; protection in the fulfillment of our vocation and ultimate peace for the children of God through the victory of the right and the blessedness of life everlasting in God" (p. 270).

JOHN D. HERR.

University of Pennsylvania.

### **The Modern Message of the Psalms.**

By ROLLIN H. WALKER. New York: The Abingdon Press. \$1.50.

THIS new and suggestive volume satisfies both mind and heart. Professor Walker assumes in the title of the book that the Psalms have a message for modern life. Can this assumption be sustained? Old and weather-beaten though they be—so real are they that we never tire of them. They have a permanent



hold upon the race because they voice man's universal experience. There is an old tradition among the Jewish Rabbis in all lands, that over the bed of King David a large harp was suspended, and that during the hour of midnight sweet sounds of harmony filled the royal apartments. Night after night—we are told—the wind swept over the lyre-strings, calling forth the loftiest music; until the King was constrained to rise from his slumbers and indite words suitable to the music he had heard. The tradition is only another way of saying that the Book of Psalms contains the music of the human heart as swept by the great Creator's hand. This is Professor Walker's background in the volume before us.

There are eleven chapters in the book—with a preface, introduction, an appendix on the Imprecatory Psalms, and a questionnaire. It has a twofold value which may be summed up in a couple of words—homiletic and devotional. Preachers and teachers will find nuggets of gold in every chapter. It has also a therapeutic value for men and women torn with the conflicts of our modern life. The chapters entitled "Psalms of Suffering and Deliverance," and "Psalms of Courage and Confidence," might well be read first as expressing the deepest convictions of the author hammered out on the anvil of experience. With sound analogy he sets forth interestingly that the modern scientific doctrine of the uniformity of Natural Law ought to make it easier to believe in an equal dependability in God's moral character.

The appendix on the Imprecatory Psalms, though brief, is both clever and satisfying. No amount of apologetics can square them with the Ethics of Jesus; and yet our author tells us that during the Armenian massacres—which took place in his early manhood—a missionary wrote

home to an American friend: "Don't be too hard on the Imprecatory Psalms!"

This little volume is broad in outlook, rich in scholarship, and modern in its message to men and women who desire to call their souls their own.

THOMAS W. DAVIDSON.

The Twelfth Street Reformed Church,  
Brooklyn, N. Y.

**We Prophecy in Part.** By WILLARD L. SPERRY. New York: Harper & Brothers. \$2.00.

THESE lectures were intended primarily for young men preparing for a life in the Christian ministry. Out of a singularly productive ministerial career, an accomplished scholar and devout minister of Christ frankly reveals the inner aims and inspirations of a great heart.

How clear is the distinction between the function of the priest and the prophet as Doctor Sperry puts it in his opening chapter. How revealing his characterization of the prophet as a "sport" in the stream of culture. The priest may be a product of the schools, of training, of culture. The prophet is a gift of God. "The prophet is under bonds to God. His authority derives from God and his reckonings are made to God. His freedom is, therefore, more rigidly conditioned than that of any other of his fellows."

The chapter on "The Prophet's Woe" is a volume in itself. It comes from a soul which has felt the serious perils which lurk along the pathway of the honest man who has a message too deep or advanced for the understanding of the earth-bound. The young preachers who heard this lecture will often remember it when influential pewholders object to "impractical ideals" and "pulpit dreamers." The real prophet will hold steady in his course, making clear his understanding of the



ethical implications of Jesus' teachings. He will, however, avoid the peril of attempting to apply the technique of a specific reform. He follows the example of the Master who insisted upon justice among men but refused to adjudicate a specific case. "Who made me a judge or divider over you?" "It is my province to proclaim the principle, you make the application." This gives the timelessness to Jesus' teachings. A prophetic message bears no dates of origin or expiration. Doctor Sperry illustrates this wise attitude when he says, "The America of the future will be a land of fewer unhappy contrasts than the America of the past. We have in the last few years written into our laws many provisions for social well-being which were long overdue. However they may be modified in form, they will not be deleted in substance, and others of like nature will follow. The thrust of life is in that direction." He makes clear the duty of the preacher to proclaim Christian ideals with full freedom of speech to which the laymen should raise no objection. On the other hand, the preacher must see that application to the particular case is not his affair. We do not know a better book for a layman to place in the hands of his minister. The minister will also find it the best possible answer to the complaining layman.

For the great preacher and the great sermon Doctor Sperry has deep admiration. However, he sees clearly that few men can attain to this and also that Christianity does not depend largely on conspicuous pulpites. "Good preaching is more important today than great preaching." "Good preaching will be self-effacing, sympathetic and communal." The *sine qua non* of the prophet is that he must be a good man. "The edification of the Church is not a matter of better organization; it is not a matter of gratifying the

palates of sermon-tasters; it is a matter of eliciting one Christian mind and forming one Christian purpose as the Church's answer to the aggression of the debased religions of these troubled times."

Doctor Sperry sees clearly the recrudescence of the reactionary theologies of yesterday and also the just criticisms of progressive Protestantism. He refuses, however, to be frightened by the probability of hard political and religious conflict here as in other lands. He insists that relapse into "superstition, sentimentalism, and willful dogmatism" offers us no hope. "There can be no permanent future hope for Christian thought in the theological retreats which are being sounded all along the line."

"Our problem is how to concede every valid criticism and to preserve our power of self-criticism, without abandoning altogether the position which four hundred years of history assign to us."

LUTHER FREEMAN.

Pomona, California.

**New Frontiers of Religion. The Church in a Changing Community.**  
By ARTHUR L. SWIFT, JR. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.00.

It has been said, wisely and wittily, that the pessimist is one who sees an obstacle in every opportunity, the optimist one who sees an opportunity in every obstacle. Professor Swift challenges the Christian Church to find in her very difficulties that opportunity for service for which she has long been praying. The natural and the social sciences which have modified the social and intellectual environment to the disfavor of the churches "have at the same time presented them with new opportunities and resources—as for example, a more intelligent constit-

uency, instruments such as the talking moving picture, and the radio, and methods such as that of group work and of the survey. . . . In the right understanding and use of these and similar opportunities and resources and in full accord with its basic purpose and tradition, lies the Church's chance and challenge" (p. 164).

The book should receive a warm welcome on both sides of the Atlantic. The question discussed in the Summer Number of *RELIGION IN LIFE* by Doctor Latourette, "What is the condition of religion in the United States?" is one to which the visitor from Britain tends to become immune through its frequent repetition by earnest newspaper reporters. He will be able now to excuse himself from answering, pointing to this admirable diagnosis by one who has examined the evidence at first hand.

The study is divided into four parts—"Basic Patterns of Religious Behavior"; "The Church as the Product of Social Change"; "The Church as the Cause of Social Change"; "New Frontiers of Religion."

In the first of these, the European student might ask for a brief examination of Wilhelm Schmidt's argument for a primitive monotheism, but, it must at once be added, this section is admirable in its clarity and its brevity.

Most valuable of all are the constructive suggestions of Part IV—in particular the author's wise and cautious judgment on amateur psychiatry.

There are a few slips in proof-reading. For example, "Tyler" (p. 23) should be "Tylor"; "veniality" (p. 45) should be "venality"; "Catholic Church" (*passim*) would be written better as "Roman Catholic Church."

The main contention is that we are facing a crisis which "man feels impotent

to meet if he be unaccompanied by the Divine Spirit. The leaders of our churches must devote more of their energies to the cultivation of the presence of God. When they have done this they will perhaps be able to preach God with a new earnestness of conviction which will make Him once more the central fact of life for the multitudes whose belief has faded to the pattern of a polite tradition to which church attendance is a form of homage."

EDGAR P. DICKIE.

The University of  
St. Andrews, Scotland.

**The War Against God.** By SIDNEY DARK and R. S. ESSEX. New York: The Abingdon Press. \$2.00.

HERE is a review and anthology of religious conceptions past and present. The book traces mankind's developing and overlapping conceptions of a God of Wrath or of Love, of Indifference or of Omnipotence, of Rites and Conventions, of Priests or of people, and shows how sometimes those who were fighting to destroy false or incomplete ideas of God were denounced as atheists, or even more tragically believed themselves to be at least agnostics, because they failed to realize that their understanding of Christ's message was in advance of that comprehended by the organized Churchmen of their time. Not only are the views of individual philosophers presented and analyzed, but the group or national views of Russia, Mexico and Spain, Germany and Italy, Turkey and England.

The essential differences between revolts against arrogant State or class-controlled churches and revolts against a conception of God as a loving Father of all mankind are distinguished, as is the

propriety of discussion, with sincere exponents of each, ignoring those too indifferent to care, too shallow for argument, or too selfishly acquisitive to see anything but their own self-interest. The totalitarian is traced through the ignoble and devastating religious wars and crusades, the Inquisition and such periods, periods which were not marked by great spiritual awareness however vociferously fanatical were the avowed aims of the leaders. Advocates of violence, coercion, fraud, and cruelty profess that such are but means to a noble end, necessary steps to bring a unity of purpose to such parts of society as survive the purges.

Such purge-advocates profess to believe that progress only results from a series of Calvaries, each of which is necessary to herald in its respective Resurrection or Renaissance. Certainly such leaders deny all belief in the continuing regenerative force of one supreme act of divine sacrifice.

An index adds immeasurably to the value of this consecutively presented series of reviews. Whether or not we agree with the authors' interpretation of all the various views discussed in no way should detract from our appreciation for their tolerant and intelligent presentation. They have laid a sound foundation for individual analysis of what is behind each manifestation of *The War Against God*.

HALLAM RICHARDSON.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

#### Contemporary Continental Theology.

By WALTER MARSHALL HORTON.  
New York: Harper & Brothers.  
\$2.00.

PROFESSOR HORTON's book on *Contemporary English Theology* has now been supplemented by an equally remark-

able volume on *Continental theology*. Based on personal acquaintance with a good number of leading European theologians, Professor Horton's book is a precious source, which gives accurate first-hand information in a very readable style. Because of the bewildering complexity of post-war theological developments in the Old World, Doctor Horton has deliberately confined his survey to some great representative figures of the main groups of Christianity: Berdyaev and Bulgakov in Orthodox Theology; Maritain and Przywara in Roman Catholicism; Barth, Rosenberg, Hauer, Hirsch, Heim and Althaus in Germany; and Nygren, Aulén and Hromadka in Protestant theology outside Germany. This selective method both helps to concentrate the interest of the reader upon some of the most important problems of theological thought, and confirms the author's contention that modern Continental theology deserves the careful study and sustained interest of Anglo-Saxon, especially American, theologians. The Oberlin professor does not thereby repudiate the thesis of his former book on English theology, in which he recommended to American theology that a stronger emphasis be laid on the Anglo-Saxon element of its tradition. Yet he reaches now the following conclusion: "Our theology needs exposure to Continental thought to give it depth, and to British thought to give it *balance and wise moderation*; but . . . we have to think our way more *consciously* than the British, and much more *cautiously* than the Continentals" (p. 230).

The most interesting and in many respects very exciting part of the book is formed by the penetrating analyses of Berdyaev's and Przywara's systems. One feels how by force of contrast the author has succumbed to the lure and suggestive power of these so utterly un-American thinkers. On the other hand, Doctor

Horton shows a deep-seated individual prejudice against Barth and Barthianism. While he is fully prepared to recognize the greatness and the historic significance of the Swiss theologian he, nevertheless, believes in the need for, and the future of, theological liberalism. He hopes that U. S. A. theology will be spared that complete reorientation of which Barth is the most conspicuous exponent on the European continent.

The only serious criticism which I venture to make of this most helpful and brilliant book would be directed against the author's predilection for the extreme intellectualism of certain Continental thinkers. For thereby he overlooks that the most influential factors that at present shape the life of the Roman Church, for instance, are the Liturgical Movement, the Catholic Action and the vast organization of spiritual retreats rather than such eccentric philosophers as Przywara or such versatile writers as Maritain. Doctor Horton seems to be attracted mainly by the originality and newness of thought of the men whose works he analyzes. But unless I am completely mistaken, theology everywhere is entering now into a new "authoritarian" phase. Berdyaev, Przywara and Barth, to mention only the most outstanding representatives, mark the point where the old-time liberalism is being transformed into a new type of denominational theology. People no longer appreciate so much the originality of preachers or writers; they want to be directed to the unchangeable objective basis of belief. I do not think that the ideal for which liberalism formerly stood is now entirely out of date. But liberalism has to face a completely new situation. Against dead traditionalism it has to awaken the consciousness of the Church, and to discover the possibilities of applying the eternal truth to new modes of experience. This task can be performed, however, only in

close contact with the spiritual, social and administrative life of the Church. There is certainly no more room for theological subjectivism.

OTTO PIPER.

Princeton Theological Seminary.

**The National Faith of Japan: A Study in Modern Shinto.** By D. C. HOLTOM. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company. \$3.75.

NEARLY forty years ago Lafcadio Hearn wrote that no real knowledge of Japan was possible without an understanding of Japanese religion, and the statement remains true. The religious history of every important cultural group is in certain respects unique, and much that is unique in Japanese religious history relates to that vague and yet rather clearly defined aggregation of attitudes, beliefs, and practices known as Shinto, the Way of the Gods. Shinto, in its varied forms, is a living religion; or, perhaps it would be better to say, is a series of religious strata, revealing, illustrating, and perpetuating various phases of the evolution of religion, which nowhere can be observed in living form in such significant fashion as in Japan. And as Japan moves toward a more prominent position on the stage of the modern world, Shinto, likewise, demands attention.

Few students of Oriental religions are so well equipped to handle their material as is Doctor Holtom—a Christian missionary of many years residence in Japan, thoroughly grounded in modern methods of historiography, widely informed in the field of anthropology and of the history of religions, well acquainted with Japanese interpretations of their own religious, cultural, and national struggles, a keen and tireless observer who knows what to look for and how to see, and withal broadly sympathetic. It is therefore hardly

possible to commend too highly the contribution which Doctor Holtom has made to the study of Shinto in the book under review, nor is it too much to say that in no European language does there exist so adequate a treatment of the origins, history, and present status of the indigenous cult of Japan in its various manifestations.

It is not as well known outside of Japan as it should be that Shinto exists in two main forms, which at times are to be found in conflict with each other: State Shinto, essentially a religion of patriotism, centering in the belief in the divine origin of the imperial sovereigns, of the people of Japan, and assuring therefore an unending and glorious destiny to the Empire; and Sect Shinto, consisting of a variety of denominations or sects, worshipping the same divinities as those worshipped in State Shinto, but centering in the activities of historical founders rather than mythological, and frequently concerned with other problems than those which fall within the purview of State Shinto, even at times developing points of view which bring them into conflict with State Shinto. State Shinto perpetuates itself largely because of the widespread belief that unless patriotism is based on a religious metaphysic it will disintegrate, and the national cohesion and vigor of Japan will languish. Large masses of people, it holds, cannot be welded into a significant unity except through a common loyalty to a religious absolute, and unless the nation-state is regarded as a religious absolute of patriarchal type, it cannot resist the corroding influences of democratic individualism. It is at this point that State Shinto will function.

In contrast with State Shinto, the Shinto sects are privately supported, and maintain their own religious organizations and legal properties totally distinct

from those of the State shrines. Indeed, they are denied the use of the latter for meeting-places. They carry on definite religious propaganda, and the attempt is made to minister to the total religious and moral, even physical, life of their adherents. The government at present recognizes thirteen such sects as independent legal bodies, with a total membership of some seventeen million.

Doctor Holtom very properly organizes his material relative to these two types of Shinto, investigating their origin, inquiring into their nature, and recounting their history. With great clarity he sets forth the problems which they face and which they present both for Japan and for the world.

FRED D. GEALY.

The Iliff School of Theology.

**Understanding Youth: His Search for a Way of Life.** By ROY A. BURKHART. New York: The Abingdon Press. \$1.50.

THERE is no royal road to understanding youth. Charts, analyses, statistics furnish a basis for knowledge, but understanding will come only to a person who loves and works with young people.

Doctor Burkhardt is one of the few individuals in the Church who has succeeded in having a large following of young people throughout the country as well as in one specific church. He understands youth because he works with them. For about four years he was Director of Young People's Work for the United Brethren in Christ Church, and for nearly eight years he was a member of the Youth Department of the International Council of Religious Education. He was one of the adult leaders behind the Christian Youth Building a New World program. When he went to his present church he was given the opportunity to put into practice many



of the plans he had advocated as a national leader.

This book by Doctor Burkhardt is worth reading if for no other reason than the story of his own experience in a church, which he gives in the last two chapters of the book. He speaks of his experience not in a self-laudatory way but as an objective statement of fact. For anyone who is discouraged about the possibility of young people's work in a local church this book should open new horizons and provide real inspiration.

Doctor Burkhardt's success can be seen not only in the number of young people who attend his church regularly but in their increased devotion and loyalty to the cause of Jesus Christ. In an average Sunday morning congregation he will have some five hundred young people. In the evening he has six groups meeting at the same time, ranging in age from seventh-grade boys and girls to young married couples in their thirties. Instead of having one choir in the church, there are three combined choirs for children, young people, and adults, with a membership of nearly two hundred. The young people have taken an interest in major social issues, such as war and peace, economic reconstruction, wholesome boy and girl relationships, and the creative use of their leisure time. This story of Doctor Burkhardt's own church work, together with a chart giving suggested topics for a youth program in a church, is included in the book.

The first part of the book deals with the results of many questionnaire studies of youth. It discusses the goals of youth and their principles of living. It finds that problems of high school young people "cluster about getting along with others, boy and girl friendships, courtship, sex, popularity, getting along with parents, developing personality, problems of mental health, leadership problems, life op-

portunities, student problems, preparing for marriage, right and wrong, and personal sources of power."

Doctor Burkhardt states his conviction that "the Church has grown in the number of religious activities it puts on, but it has not increased in its power to help people to experience religion." This book is Doctor Burkhardt's answer to pastors, parents, and teachers who would try to understand youth and to lead them to a more vital religious experience.

IVAN M. GOULD.

Director of Young People's Work,  
The International Council  
of Religious Education.

**The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man.** By RUDOLPH OTTO. Translated by Floyd V. Filson and Bertram Lee Woolf. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House. \$3.50.

THE late Professor Otto brought wide learning in the tongues and religious traditions of the East to his interpretation of the Messianic consciousness of Jesus. In this study he has avoided two errors particularly annoying to simple Christians who are amateurs in New Testament scholarship. He has neither assumed that everything in Jesus' teachings is original, a fresh revelation, nor on the other hand does he deny originality to Jesus just because for each of His teachings taken alone some earlier parallel is to be found.

While insisting upon Jesus' uniqueness, Doctor Otto classifies Him as of a type of Galilean itinerant preacher which had long been familiar, and further as of the type of charismatic person which has conspicuous representatives in other Near Eastern connections, notably in Islam. It is by this charismatic cast, carefully explained, that the author accounts interestingly for miracle as an integral and



cardinal element in the Gospel records.

The prime note in Jesus' message was His proclamation of the Kingdom. This idea is traced plausibly and with surprising coincidences from late Hebrew thought to Indian sources through Persian channels. Jesus conceived of the Kingdom, in harmony with these antecedents, as at once temporarily future and transcendently present, and as dynamically in the world from His time forward—a transforming impulse which is to be equated with the Holy Spirit.

The hope may occur to a reader that with the aid of Greek and subsequent thought-forms this misty but vivid concept in Jesus' mind can perhaps be articulated in three co-ordinate members carrying satisfaction and conviction to modern intelligence, as the Kingdom within, or the authentic mystical awareness of harmony with God; the Kingdom to come, or the social fulfillment of Jesus' ethic on earth; and the Eternal Kingdom, non-spacial and timeless, the world as God sees it in the Everlasting Now, this ultimate Reality being the ground and source of the two phases of Kingdom manifestation falling potentially within the range of human experience.

Doctor Otto does not hold that Jesus' Messianic consciousness can be reduced without remainder to suggestions from the past mediated mainly by the Book of Enoch. His position is rather that, given a native intuition of supreme vocation, Jesus' vocation naturally clothed itself in this readily available expression.

In that process changes would of necessity be wrought at the dictate of Jesus' governing conviction as to His ministry. Conspicuously Jesus altered the whole tenor of previous Messianism by recognizing the Messianic relevance of the Servant passages in Second Isaiah. Doctor Otto here throws light on the principle of vicarious suffering as no novelty in Hebrew

religion, but a matter of warm emotional apprehension from of old which neither by the fathers nor by Jesus was ever crudely compressed into a pseudo-logical substitutionary theory. The author finds this Second Isaiah association graphically portrayed in the Holy Communion, which was at first simply a Breaking of Bread (without sacramental significance in the cup, since it was circulated first and incidentally) as a Covenant of participation in the coming Kingdom with which Jesus as the coming King was one. There is at this point a hint at least of an understanding of the Real Presence which acceptably replaces the extremes of transubstantiation and mere memorial, alike offensive to the sentiment which this sacrament awakens in most Christians who receive it with real and humble faith.

The distinction which Doctor Otto draws between eschatology and apocalyptic is illuminating and reassuring, as against Schweitzer's view, for instance. He brings clear evidence that the gospel is thoroughly eschatological. But by the same evidence it appears that the gospel is neither otherworldly to the neglect of here and now, nor more than incidentally or perhaps even accidentally apocalyptic in tone.

On the whole, this is one of the most vital and stimulating books that has come to my desk in years, on the great theme which it treats.

RUSSELL HENRY STAFFORD.  
Old South Church in Boston.

**Resources for Living: A Plain-Man's Philosophy.** By GAIUS GLENN ATKINS. New York: Harper & Brothers. \$2.50.

It is always difficult to review a book by Doctor Atkins, because Doctor Atkins writes very much as Max Planck's *quantum* acts—that is, according to the

"principle of indeterminacy." If one tries, therefore, to be analytical and to estimate an Atkins book on the basis of its philosophical weight and dimensions, the result is to lose sight of its spiritual flight and motion. If one asks, What is the contribution that this book makes to religious thought? one must almost surely forego asking, What is its contribution to faith and feeling?

For, in the case of this particular Atkins book at least, one senses the presence and the effect of a deep dichotomy (to use a word that Doctor Atkins would never use save with a whimsical apology) between faith and thought, between appreciation and analysis, between insight and judgment; or, in fine, between Atkins the mystic and Atkins the man of doubtful mind, between Atkins the seer and Atkins the skeptic, between Atkins boldly declaring, Lord, I believe! and Atkins wistfully praying, Help Thou my unbelief.

The title in its way bears out this same impression of an inward division between confident assurance on the one hand and an almost deprecatory lack of assurance on the other. For here we have, *Resources for Living*—a brave caption indeed: But then, as if to mitigate the boldness of so strong a claim, we have the qualifying title, *A Plain-Man's Philosophy*.

As a matter of fact, this is not at all the philosophy of a plain man; it is rather the philosophy of a very extraordinary and urbane and cultivated man—the philosophy of a man who far from being plain or simple in his thought and his way of thinking, is ornate, complicated and highly sophisticated. No truly plain man would or even could possibly have such a philosophy as is contained in this book, but only a man like Doctor Atkins—one of the ripest, maturest, and most well-seasoned and well-flavored representatives

of the liberal movement in religion which came to its finest flowering just before the War in 1914 and which since then has commenced to pass beyond its fruition. Philosophically, Doctor Atkins stands, therefore, for a time that is gone, for an era that has all but ended. Yet *spiritually* (if we may use that term in the way in which, one believes, he would like to have us employ it) he belongs, not to a time that is gone nor to an era that has ended, but rather to all the times and eras that have been and are to come. Philosophically, one ventures to assert, Doctor Atkins is a modernistically conditioned liberal; but spiritually—that is to say, personally and organically—he is surely a catholic, a man of all times and of none, a *plain* man in the profoundest sense, a man of the most mature simplicity.

And so it is quite impossible for this reviewer to review Doctor Atkins' book. If there were space, however, he could quote a dozen passages and set out a score of aphorisms that in themselves and of themselves would prove the compelling power of the writing to awaken wonderful anticipations of spiritual things to come in minds which still think wistfully of beautiful things that were "loved long since but lost awhile."

DWIGHT J. BRADLEY.

The Council for Social Action of the  
Congregational and Christian Churches.

**Four Ways of Philosophy.** By IRWIN EDMAN. New York: Henry Holt & Company. \$1.50.

IN THIS book dedicated to Judge Cardozo, himself a philosopher of no slight eminence, Professor Edman presents the latest apologia for naturalism. He does it in so winsome and gracious a way as to tempt the reader who is not on his guard to say, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a naturalist." If I resist the tempta-

tion it is not because I do not recognize much that is true and stimulating in what Professor Edman has to say, but because it seems to me that, in spite of his keen insight into points of detail, he has failed to make two major distinctions which might have led him to a different conclusion.

One is the distinction between philosophy as a method and philosophy as a positive faith. Professor Edman invites us to consider four ways of philosophy and so leads us to believe that his interest is in the first aspect of his problem. And for the first three of his four main chapters this proves to be the case. We are invited to consider in turn philosophy as logical faith, as mystical insight, and as social criticism, and under each head he has much that is illuminating to say. It is especially gratifying to find a professional philosopher recognizing that the great mystics were thinkers as well as saints, and giving, for instance, to the consideration of Saint John of the Cross the same respectful attention that he gives to Kant or to Hegel.

When we come to the last chapter, "Philosophy as Nature Understood," we are transported to a different world of discourse. Nature is not a method to be contrasted with other methods, but the common object of all philosophical study, the theme of the mystics, the pragmatists, and the idealists, as well as the naturalists technically so called. Had Professor Edman concentrated upon the distinctive method of modern science, which is controlled experiment, he would have brought his last chapter into line with the others. But his interest here is predominantly in the subject matter with which science deals—that fascinating yet elusive sum total of reality which it has become the fashion for our contemporaries to designate as nature, as though that word alone, unless

further defined, told us anything definite and illuminating.

This suggests my second difficulty with Professor Edman's book—that it brings together under a single title, as though they belonged in the same class, conceptions of nature which differ *toto coelo*. When Aquinas used the word nature, or Calvin, or for that matter the rationalists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, they had something very definite and unambiguous in mind with which it was possible to do business. They meant that part of the real world—a part definitely limited in time and space—which could be known by reason and on whose uniformity it was possible to count. Beyond nature stretched the boundless expanse of the divine—the realm of values and meanings which had its supreme rule and dynamic in God. Supernaturalists and rationalists (the naturalists of that day) might differ in their conception of God's nature and of the way He revealed Himself. Supernaturalists believed that He worked through miracle. Their opponents believed that like themselves He was a rationalist and could be known only by the mind. But that there was a God, as well as a world for Him to govern, no philosopher doubted.

What is there in common between this conception of nature and the nature which Professor Edman presents to us as furnishing the subject matter for his philosophy—a nature which has long passed the bounds originally set for it and expanded until it takes in the whole of that side of reality which our fathers called supernatural—a nature that by definition we know only in part and must therefore approach with the same kind of faith which the religion of our fathers brought to God—a nature that presents uniformities to be sure, but also constant surprises—a nature that is the home of meanings and val-

ues and claims man himself with all his aspiration and dreams as child—at once her offspring and her judge?

Do we really gain anything, it is fair to ask, by bringing under a single concept aspects of reality so diverse as those that Professor Edman's nature comprehends? Is there not something to be said for preserving the term nature for those aspects of nature which show uniform characteristics, and lend themselves to the methods of exact science and keeping the word God for the source and sum of that realm of meanings and values which we recognize in ourselves but which he would be a dogmatic philosopher indeed who would claim are to be found nowhere else?

Why indeed, one may ask, should American philosophers be so much afraid to use the word God? God is the word that more accurately than any other denotes the answer that has been given to the ultimate problems of philosophy by some of the greatest thinkers of our race, from Plato and Aristotle, through Aquinas and Scotus, Kant and Hegel, down to Royce and James. Why cover up the issues it raises by subsuming all that it means under a word that in the course of its history has acquired quite other connotations?

But I would not end on a note of criticism—I feel reading between the lines of Professor Edman's book a wistfulness that makes one suspect that one might apply to him another phrase of an ancient Book, "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God."

WILLIAM ADAMS BROWN.

Union Theological Seminary.

**What Jesus Taught.** By BURTON SCOTT EASTON. New York: The Abingdon Press. \$1.50.

THE value of this book is sufficiently guaranteed by the name of the author.

Burton Scott Easton is one of the great New Testament scholars of our time, encyclopedic in his information, tireless in research, acute in judgment. *What Jesus Taught* is a small volume, printed and bound in a cheerful form, which looks by no means like a ponderous theological work. But in its brief pages there is distilled a wealth of authoritative scholarship.

As Doctor Easton says in his preface: "This collection of Jesus' sayings is designed primarily for those who do not care to follow the intricacies of modern Gospel criticism and who wish only the firm ground of 'assured' results. The principle of selection, therefore, has not been the editor's own preference but the general consensus of present-day opinion; with a greater readiness to omit rather than to include debated passages." Later in the paragraph which begins with the two foregoing sentences he says, "There are few serious scholars who will not agree that Jesus' actual teaching is summarized with reasonable accuracy by the collection as a whole."

In other words, Doctor Easton has gathered into this book those sayings of Jesus which he believes to be authenticated by the predominant opinion of New Testament scholars generally. He has grouped these sayings under five main divisions—"Righteousness," "The Father," "The Mission," "The Rejection," "Conversion"—each with sub-divisions under which the sayings are more specifically entitled. Of course any such grouping of the sayings of Jesus is bound to be subjective, and the reader of the book may in various instances wonder why Doctor Easton listed the particular saying under one heading rather than another. For example, the beautiful parable of the widow casting her two mites into the treasury is listed under "Love of Money,"

which is scarcely where one would instinctively expect to find it. Nevertheless, in the main his grouping of the words of our Lord does give a graphic indication of those realities in human life and conduct on which the light of His mind and spirit fell.

About half the book is made up of the words of Jesus. The latter part contains Doctor Easton's own brief notes and commentaries upon each one of the sayings in order. These are often astonishing in the amount of suggestion and interpretation which is packed into a few brief lines. In every case they go straight to the heart of the matter, and they push aside all trivialities and artificial misreadings of the New Testament words. Consider, for example, these sentences in his note upon the parable of the good Samaritan: "This story was told by Jesus to explain the meaning of 'neighbor' and for no other reason. There are no hidden meanings ('allegories') in it: it is an illustration of a truth, not a puzzle; told to help, not to confuse. . . . To ask about the 'spiritual meaning' of the inn or anything else in the story is pointless; all the details mean just what they appear to mean and nothing more. This principle is always to be kept in mind in explaining Jesus' stories ('parables')."

It is significant to note that although the title of the book, *What Jesus Taught*, and the sub-title, "The Sayings Translated and Arranged With Expository Commentary," give no specific statement of the fact that some rather than all of the Gospels are to be included, Doctor Easton has actually confined himself to the three Synoptic Gospels and has completely left aside the Gospel of John. He does not so much as mention it either in his preface or his general text. This, of course, is fully in line with the overwhelming scholarly judgment that the Synoptic Gospels embody the reasonably direct reflection of the sayings of Christ,

whereas the fourth Gospel gives a more remote refraction of His mind through the understanding of a disciple who lived a generation or two after Jesus' time. Nevertheless, it could be wished that Doctor Easton had not dismissed the Johanne Gospel quite so summarily, but had given some indication in his preface of the degree to which he considers that back of the elaboration of the latter Gospel may lie teachings of Christ the major notes at least of which may be authentically traced.

This, however, is only a passing comment on what the book might have done in addition to what so richly it has done already.

WALTER RUSSELL BOWIE.

Grace Church,  
New York City.

#### A Southerner Discovers the South.

By JONATHAN DANIELS. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$3.00.

THIS fascinating book fruited from the honest and energetic endeavor of a young Southerner of the oldest lineage to portray and appraise his beloved Southland. For that purpose, he traveled indefatigably through the heat of the summer, and chatted with and interviewed every sort of person.

His piled-up and picturesque descriptions of external features should not be permitted to obscure his insights. Beginning at Arlington and Williamsburg and ending at Savannah and Charleston, he swiftly presents innumerable characteristic panoramas. The good-looking women of the Southland; the ugliness and exploitation of the new industrialism, which he detests; the cornering of scenery for profit, which angers him; the promise he finds in the profitable business of a big truck of the American Library Associa-



tion in its runs through Mississippi and Arkansas; the resentment of the South against external criticism, a resentment so strong that it prefers to be robbed to being improved by Northern incomers; his apparently inconsistent enthusiasm for David Lilienthal, a graduate of DePauw and Director of the T.V.A.—these are all in this book.

The author's candid disclosures of the deprivations of the Southland are disturbing to Northerners, who have associated the South with beauty and romance. He describes it as the ill-kept backyard of America, where old, ugly things are retained which in a decent, sanitary community would long ago have been thrown away. He holds it to be scandalous that the lowest incomes, the poorest food, the worst housing are in a region which should be a garden. He asserts that many places potentially rich in resources are so poor that birds and rabbits carry their provisions when they pass through them. The average spendable income in the South is \$315.00 a year as against \$546.00 in the nation; \$250.00 in South Carolina, as against \$843.00 in New York. Northerners who have thought they had understanding of and sympathy with the South must wonder what Louisianians will think of the vividest chapter in the book, "Ghost in Louisiana"; and Mississippians when they read that they are poor to hunger, ignorance and almost despair; and Alabamians that they do not know that there is a League of Nations and think of Woodrow Wilson as an Athenian demagogue.

The abounding wit of Mr. Daniels plays upon the physical with what appears to be an emphasis upon the wanton. He

evinces little interest in the far-famed religious life of the Southland. His very occasional allusions are usually tinged with deprecation.

The attribution of the misfortunes of the South to the war between the States, he holds was always exaggerated and is now completely superseded. He blames discriminating tariffs, freight differentials, absentee ownership, insufficient capital, control of credit and tools of production, and the long neglect of such economic opportunities as the manufacture of paper from the quick-growing pines. He is for departing from the traditional attitude of docilely doing without, of accepting distress and helplessness in the midst of potential abundance as inevitable. He has no confidence in the progress promised to come from those who are pronounced to be supermen, who would impose upon his people ways of living that are alien to the patterns of the Southern past and to the deepest preferences of the Southern present. He believes deeply in giving people the freedom to make their own choice, because he believes in the general good sense of the average man and woman. He urges his people to begin to think with their heads instead of their hearts, and take the attitude he found upon a Charleston epitaph—Confront life with ancient courage, and death with Christian hope. He holds that Southern whites and Negroes have come to know that they are in the dark together and can never get to day alone, and that they are entirely capable of happy, productive, peaceful life side by side.

JOHN W. LANGDALE.

Book Editor of the Methodist  
Episcopal Church.



## Bookish Brevities

John Cowper Powys defines the pleasures of literature as the delicious shock of absolute truth.

Eighty per cent of all the books produced in the United States are published in New York City.

Until the recent change in postal policy beneficial to books, a sizable volume could be sent more cheaply to Tokyo than to California.

The General Theological Library in Boston lends some twenty thousand volumes annually.

History has displaced English two to one as the subject of applicants to teach in New York City schools.

An eclipse of art, poetry and literature in continental Europe appears to be part of the penalty inflicted by the prevalent barbarism of hate and cruelty.

Dr. G. B. Thompson writes from Karachi, India: "Our Indian pastor, the Rev. C. A. Kalim, was offered the loan of any numbers of *RELIGION IN LIFE* that interested him. He took away all and reports that he is benefiting much from reading them."

"*RELIGION IN LIFE* is always stimulating and useful. We who are out and far away particularly appreciate the splendid articles from such noted contributors. There is scarcely an article in any number which does not interest us and we

thank you for them."—CARL A. FELT, *Peiping Theological Seminary, China.*

Book reviewing as a profession began with the nineteenth century. Coleridge recorded his astonishment that Southey was able to make a living by reviewing. DeQuincey and James Mill did likewise. The profession has succumbed before the demand of the mass-public for news and not opinions.

*John Wesley's Awakening*, which was written by Dr. James R. Joy, a contributor to this number of *RELIGION IN LIFE*, has been highly praised and largely distributed in America and abroad. It has been translated into Portuguese.

From the magazine stories of each year, Edward J. O'Brien selects for book publication—*The Best Short Stories*. His measuring rods are an abundant vitality that could move swiftly and exuberantly but is restrained, a ready intelligibility to most people, an intrinsic and timely interest, and a successful ending.

*Each With His Own Brush* (Friendship Press), by Daniel J. Fleming, is a beautiful production. It pictures sixty-five paintings and carvings of Christian art in Asia and Africa. The result is an appealing apologetic for Christian missions, as each illustrates how truly and profoundly the Christian attitude has penetrated the indigenous culture of the various countries.

*The Message to Garcia*, by the for-

gotten Elbert Hubbard, was printed in forty languages and probably outsold any other American writing excepting *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The aforesaid famous Roycroft shops have been sold at ten per cent of their estimated value to the Federation of Churches of Infinite Science.

In the past ten years, the success of American fiction in England is a phenomenon. Some twenty per cent of the catalogued books are American. *Anthony Adverse*, *Gone with the Wind*, *Northwest Passage*, *The Rains Came*, *So Red the Rose*, *Of Mice and Men*, have had immense sales. Vitality, the sense of security, and brilliant narrative, appear to constitute the attraction.

*The Good Earth*, by Pearl Buck, latest recipient of the Nobel Prize, has been translated into twenty languages. Commenting upon American reading, the prize winner said, "I am not surprised or concerned that Mrs. Jones, the janitor's wife, joins the radio-turning, movie-going, unthinking crowd. I am concerned when Mrs. So and So in Sutton Place, a graduate of the finest college and wife of a leading business man, uses her scant leisure to read digests, which is like taking food in the form of chemical pellets at the sacrifice of taste, color and texture."

The disposition to believe that if sufficient frenzy and lung power are poured into any statement, it will be accepted, is parodied by Simon Michael Bessie in *Jazz Journalism*. He tells of the young editor who was forced to take charge of the conservative *St. Louis Globe Democrat* when the managing editor was marooned in his home by a cyclone. In his zeal to make the most of his opportunity, the young

genius ran the story of the cyclone under a headline composed of huge wooden type. Surveying the edition in the post-storm calm, the managing editor remarked, "It's a good story, but the type. I was saving that for the Second Coming!"

"The stage can do much to help or to hinder the cause of true religion, and is no longer regarded as an enemy of the Church. There have been many plays, like some of Galsworthy's and Shaw's, in which ministers of religion have been used as mouthpieces of fanaticism, of hypocrisy, or moral timidity; but there have been others which exalted true Christlikeness and dramatized the Beatitudes without knowing it. One curious fact about stage religion has often struck me in reading and seeing plays; that is that whereas Protestant ministers of all denominations are frequently held up to ridicule or contempt, the Catholic priest is always immune. Is this because playwrights and producers dare not affront the Catholic spectator and the Catholic press, but regard the Protestant clergy as fair game, not likely to complain? For each there is a type: the priest—wise, kind, unselfish, efficient; the minister or missionary—bigoted, narrow, self-seeking, futile. There are many exceptions, but the trend is unmistakable. Wherever a Protestant minister on the stage is represented as sincere and intelligent, he is likely to be made a martyr to a cause by a selfish and un-Christian congregation. One would like to see a play once in a while in which the true place of organized religion in our American Society is fairly represented."

*Recent Literature and Religion*, by John Rothwell Slater, Chairman of the Department of English, University of Rochester.